



SLAVE PITS OF QUABUS

FIFTH EDITION COMPATIBLE

Horrible happenings transpire below Old Blire Manor.
Featuring art by Tim Hartin and Paper Forge.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Adventure Primer	3
Background	3
Slave Pits of Quabus	4
Arrival at Blire Manor	4
General Features	4
Patrols	5
Keyed Locations	5
Map of Dungeon Quabus Level 1 by Tim Hartin	6
Wrap-Up: Further Into Quabus	14
Open Gaming License	15



SLAVE LORDS OF QUABUS

This adventure is the second part of four in the *Slave Lords of Quabus* adventure path which takes characters from 3rd level to 7th level.

Part 1. Danger at Blire Manor. A gang of mercenaries draws attention to itself when it starts operating out of old Blire Manor.

Part 2. Slave Pits of Quabus. In the old dragon dungeon Quabus, villains take part in a cruel slave trade.

Part 3. Secrets of the Dungeon Quabus. Deeper into the old dragon dungeon Quabus, a great evil stirs.

Part 4. Assault on Dungeon Quabus. A war is brewing in the dragon dungeon Quabus.

CREDITS

This adventure was a collaborative effort brought to you by these awesome folks:

Producers: The DMDave Team

Story and Mechanics: [DMDave](#)

Proofing: Benjamin "Sarge" Gilyot

Cover Illustrator: Shutterstock

Cartography: [Tim Hartin](#)

Interior Illustrations: [Paper Forge](#) and Shutterstock

Additional Support: The DMDave Team

Special Thanks: A big thanks to our friends at *Wizards of the Coast* for making the coolest game in the world and allowing creators like ourselves to borrow your open license.

HOW TO RUN THIS ADVENTURE

To properly run this adventure, you need the Fifth Edition core rulebooks.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their character first arrive at a location or under a specific circumstance, as described in the text.

The core 5e monster book contains stat blocks for most of the creatures found in this adventure. When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block in the core monster book. If the monster is not included in the core monster book, text in parenthesis point to the monster's source.

Spells and equipment mentioned in the adventure are described in the core player's rulebook. Magic items are described in the core GM's guide.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used throughout this adventure:

hp	hit points	LG	Lawful good
AC	Armor Class	CG	Chaotic good
DC	Difficulty Class	NG	Neutral good
XP	experience points	LN	Lawful neutral
pp	platinum piece(s)	N	Neutral
gp	gold piece(s)	CN	Chaotic neutral
ep	electrum piece(s)	LE	Lawful evil
sp	silver piece(s)	NE	Chaotic evil
cp	copper piece(s)	NE	Neutral evil
NPC	nonplayer character		



ADVENTURE PRIMER

Slave Pits of Quabus is a Fifth Edition adventure designed for **three to six 3rd- to 4th-level characters**, and it is optimized for a party of **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. The adventure takes place in the campaign world of Omeria in The Summer Land, but can easily be placed into any setting where an old manor with a large, underground location would fit in without too much adjustment.

This adventure is the continuation of *Danger at Blire Manor*. However, it can be played as a one-shot adventure or as part of the greater series, *Slave Lords of Quabus*.

BACKGROUND

Lord Dunkirk Blire-Tomydon lived a short, reckless life. In his twenties, he exhausted the majority of his massive inheritance on unnecessary purchases and gambling debts.

One such debt put him in the favor of the Black Rose Clan of Greatwell, a deadly organization known for drug and slave trade across the continent of Omeria. When Blire couldn't repay his debts, Vera Frogwort, a green hag working for the Clan, gave the young Tomydon Prince two options: death or service. She promised that if he chose death, she would trap his soul in an acorn to prevent resurrection. Naturally, Blire chose service.

Under Frogwort's direction, Blire funneled Black Rose Clan funds into building a large estate in the wilderness roughly 20 miles north of the River Zarathos and another 100 miles from the nearest city. Unknown to even Blire, the estate masked the entrance to an ancient dungeon called Quabus. Originally built by servants of the Great Chromatics who ruled this region of The Summer Land, Quabus became the Black Rose Clan's epicenter for slave and drug trade.

Twenty years ago, Blire disappeared. While his heirs fought over possession of the estate, the Black Rose Clan continued to use the manor and the secret tunnels below to continue their nefarious dealings.

Recently, the mercenaries who Frogwort just hired—a band called Laughing Jon and His Merryman—drew some unwanted attention to the estate. Although a group of adventurers recently cleared out the mercenaries, the Pressonian knights who patrol the area want to know more about the reasons why Laughing Jon and His Merryman used the estate as a staging ground in the first place.

WRATH OF THE GARGOYLES

Recently, the Black Rose Clan ran into some trouble while managing the slave operation below Blire Hold. A gang of gargoyles led by a particularly nasty greater gargoyle named Uvraurr have challenged the Clan for rights to the first layer of Quabus. Not only does the Clan have to deal with the issues Laughing Jon and His Merryman have caused the operation, they now have to deal with ornery elementals as well.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The following plot hooks provide some possible ways for the characters to enter the Slave Pits of Quabus.

BELOW BLIRE MANOR

The local Pressonian Knight, Sir Martha wants to know why a group of mercenaries were recently seen operating out of old Blire Manor. She offers the characters 100 gp if they can discover the manor's secrets and why it was so important to the mercenaries.

FIND QUABUS

A sage named Kheshud Bosteid (LN male human **noble**) approaches the characters and asks them if they would help him find a location of great import to The Summer Land's historians—Quabus. Quabus was rumored to be the hidden sanctuary of the ancient red dragon Tostrasz the Enormous' youngest son, Defroksanz. Many dragon historians don't believe it exists. Bosteid disagrees. Triangulating the battles in which Defroksanz and his minions participated in during the War of the Burning Plains, Bosteid theorizes that the entrance to the dungeon is hidden somewhere near old Blire manor. He offers the characters 200 gp if they can find proof that Quabus exists.

WHERE ARE THE LAGAKOU CHILDREN?

Traveling pilgrims, Casari and Eitra Lagakou were passing by the old Blire Manor while traveling north to Violl's Garden when their two children, Aspa and Mikel, went missing. They approached the house but noticed dangerous looking thugs hanging around its first floor. Although they do not have many coins in their purse, Casari and Eitra are desperate for someone to help them find their children.



SLAVE PITS OF QUABUS

Quabus was constructed nearly 300 years ago by the Great Chromatics who ruled The Summer Land. It was given as a gift to its red dragon lord, Defroksanz, by his father, the notorious Tostrasz the Enormous. There, Defroksanz toiled, recruiting all sorts of horrible creatures to fill the multi-level dungeon. During the War of the Burning Plains, Defroksanz was killed by the Anorian vaquero Happy Hune. Some of his minions fled The Summer Land with the other surviving Great Chromatics. Others returned to Quabus and have haunted the lower layers of the dungeon ever since.

ARRIVAL AT BLIRE MANOR

If the characters already played through the adventure *Danger at Blire Manor*, you can ignore this section. Otherwise, read the following when the characters arrive at Blire Manor.

What was once a proud Pressonian estate now lies mostly in ruin. A narrow path winds its way up to the manor, flanked on both sides by overgrown hedges.

The building itself is fifty to sixty feet high with what-looks-like four stories. The grounds are overgrown with flora, barely recognizable as a garden.

With the exception of dust, spiders, and the occasional rat, the mansion is completely empty. Any valuables that were in the mansion have long been removed by greedy heirs and squatters.

If the characters perform a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception or Survival) check, they find multiple muddy footprints throughout the house, most of them somewhat fresh. The footprints lead to an interior door near the east end of the building. Oddly, the door looks relatively new and it's locked. A character can pick the lock with a successful DC 14 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools, or break it down with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. Beyond the door are a set of stairs that leads thirty feet down to an old cellar. See area 1 on page [x] for details.

GENERAL FEATURES

Unless stated otherwise, the Slave Pits of Quabus have the following features:

CAVERNS AND CHAMBERS

Half of the Slave Pits are made of chambers and tunnels that were created by the Great Chromatics. The other half, areas 25-33, are natural caverns that lurk below the estate's grounds. At your discretion, the underground stream at the west end of the dungeon may connect the dungeon to other areas of interest underground.

CEILINGS, FLOORS, AND WALLS

Quabus' chambers were hewn from the stone and loose earth below the mansion. The walls, floors, and ceilings were then dressed with limestone stone bricks. The ceilings are 10 feet high in passages and 12-feet high in chambers and braced with timbers. Doorways are 7-feet high and 4-feet wide to allow for the dungeon's larger patrons to pass through unhindered. Thanks to frequent earthquakes in the region, cracks in the ceilings, floors, and walls are common.

In the cavernous part of the dungeon, the walls are natural rock formations. The floors are smooth thanks to two-centuries of foot traffic from Defroksanz's minions. In some of the caverns, clusters of stalagmites and stalactites have formed naturally.

DOORS

All of the dungeon's doors are made from solid oak and hung on iron hinges (AC 15, 25 hp, immunity to poison and psychic damage). At the center of each door is a small window that allows the guards to view whatever is on the other side of the door. Most of the doors can be locked. A locked door can be broken open by a character who uses their action to make a successful DC 17 Strength (Athletics) check. Or a character can use his or her action to make a DC 15 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools to pick the lock.

ENCHANTMENTS

Like many of the Great Chromatic's secret lairs, all of the dungeon's manmade chambers and passageways are protected from magic that would allow intruders to enter. Any spell that would allow a creature to enter or leave the dungeon or transport itself from one level to another such as astral projection, plane shift, teleport, or word of recall fail. Similarly, effects that banish creatures to another plane of existence do not work. These restrictions apply to magic items and artifacts as well. However, spells that allow movement between The Ethereal such as the etherealness spell still works.

Conjuration spells and other magical effects that summon creatures into the dungeon still function, as does magic that utilizes extradimensional space such as magnificent mansion or bags of holding. However, spells cast within those spaces are subjected to the same restrictions as the rest of the dungeon.

Finally, the dungeon, its contents, and any creature currently inside the dungeon cannot be detected by divination spells or magical effects used outside the dungeon. Spells such as locate object or scrying simply fail. The same goes for magic items that duplicate those effects or innate tracking features such as an invisible stalker's Faultless Tracker feature. However, all of these effects work so long as both the caster/user and target are inside the dungeon.

Note that none of these magical enhancements apply to the natural cavern areas 25-33.

LIGHTS

Torches are common throughout the manmade chambers and passageways, all hung into sconces in the wall. With a few exceptions, the caverns to the southwest lack light sources.

SOUNDS AND SMELLS

Overall, the dungeon is quiet. The creatures who live within do their jobs to the best of their ability and don't make too much fuss while doing it. The entire dungeon is humid and warm, therefore, the smell of mold and humanoid body odor is common throughout.

SLAVES

Multiple areas in the dungeon hold slaves that Black Rose Clan intends to either sell to the highest bidder or put to work deeper in the dungeon of Quabus. Each adult slave is a commoner and each child slave is a noncombatant. Although each of the slaves don't have two copper pieces to rub together, each one that the characters successfully frees from the dungeon earns the party an additional 100 experience points.

PATROLS

Every 10 minutes that the characters spend on this level of the dungeon Quabus, roll a d20. On a result of 20, the characters run into a Black Rose Clan patrol. The patrol consists of 4 **guards** led by a **hobgoblin**. The patrol knows their way around the dungeon and will use its traps and hazards to their advantage.

KEYED LOCATIONS

The locations detailed below are keyed to the map of the Slave Pits of Quabus on page 6.

1 - ILLUSORY CELLAR

When the characters enter the cellar, read or paraphrase the following:

This large room looks like it spans the entire underside of the manor above. Other than detritus, dust, and cobwebs, there doesn't appear to be anything of interest here.

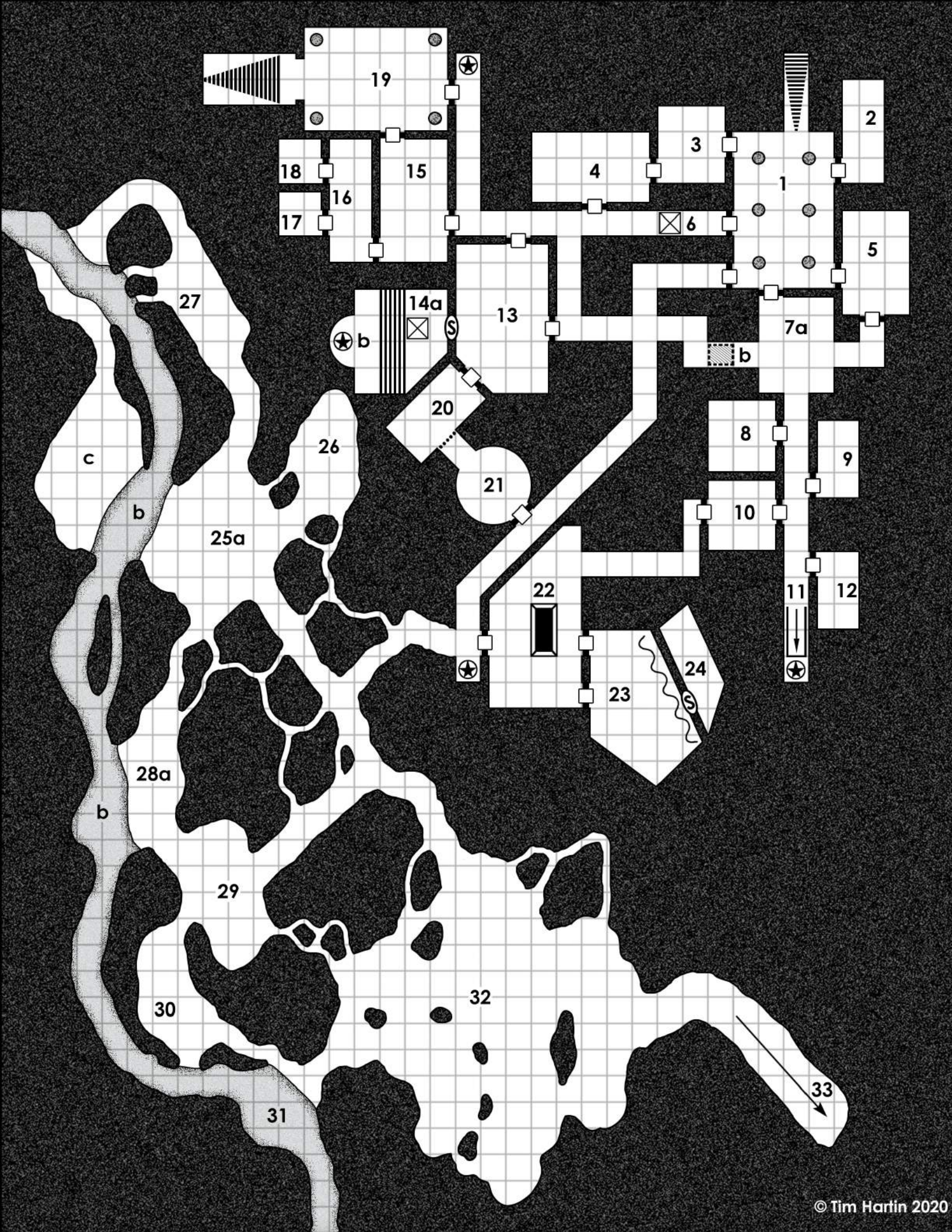
Six large columns hold up the area's 12-foot ceilings.

Illusion. The entire room is subjected to a permanent *hallucinatory terrain* spell which hides its six doors. If a character touches a section of wall where a door should be, they can feel the wood of the door instead of the stonework, thus, revealing the nature of the illusion. Otherwise, a character must make a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) to see through the illusion. Once a character sees the illusion for what it is, the illusion appears slightly transparent to them. All of the dungeon's denizens can see through the illusion.

Locked Doors. All of the doors are locked with the exception of the door that leads to area 6. If a character that can see through the illusion makes a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception or Survival) check, they can see that the footprints from upstairs enter this area but always avoid the door that leads to area 6.

Guards and Wards. The six doors (including the one that leads to area 6) are all protected by a *guards and wards* spell. If a character touches a door's handle, tries to break it down, or attempts to pick the lock without first dispelling the spell, the spell triggers. Once triggered, the following effects occur:

- The area fills with thick fog making it heavily obscured.
- Webs fill the staircase that leads back up to the manor, as the *web* spell. The strands regrow in 10 minutes if they are burned or torn away while the *guards and wards* spell lasts.



- A light flashes in areas 2 and 3, alerting the orcs there to the intruders' presence.
- All of the doors (with the exception of the one leading to area 6) become magically locked, as if sealed by the *arcane lock* spell.
- The dungeon's guards can move through the arcane locked doors with no issue, but are still affected by the fog and webs.

After the spell goes off, the three **orcs** in area 2 and the three **hobgoblins** in area 3 rush out to face the characters. Their goal is to take the characters prisoner, thus, they won't use lethal force except to defend themselves. If they start to experience difficulty, one of the orcs or hobgoblins bangs on the door leading to area 5 to alert the **bandits** there, too.

The effects last until someone speaks aloud the phrase "Dead Arrow."

2 - EAST GUARD POST

This narrow-but-long room is bare except for a round table placed at the far end.

In the unlikely event that the characters didn't trigger the *guards and wards* spell in area 1, there are three **orcs** here. Otherwise, the orcs confront the characters in area 1.

The door that leads out of the room can be locked or unlocked from this side.

Treasure. Each of the orcs carries 3d10 sp.



3 - WEST GUARD POST

There are two tables at the center of the south part of this 30 foot square room. Crates, barrels, and other containers are stacked against the walls on the north side.

In the unlikely event that the characters didn't trigger the *guards and wards* spell in area 1, there are three **hobgoblins** here. Otherwise, the hobgoblins confront the characters in area 1.

The door that leads to area 1 can be locked or unlocked from this side.

Treasure. Each of the hobgoblins carries 3d10 sp. The supplies are goods stolen from the people that Vera's mercenaries captured. In all, there is roughly 6,000 lbs worth of trade goods here, including food, barrels of ale, casks of wine, iron ingots, bolts of silk, and so forth. They are worth 300 gp in the open market. Of course, getting them out of the cellar will be a monumental task.

4 - DEMIHUMAN BARRACKS

This large room holds eight two-tier bunks, each with a pair of footlockers placed at the foot. A narrow path slides along the eastern and southern wall, connecting the only two exits.

Although they are faded and cracked, the walls are covered in murals of images depicting great red dragons breathing fire onto what-looks-like humanoid villages.

During the time of the Great Chromatics, this room was a chantry used by the dragon's followers to worship Tostrasz and his children. Since Black Rose Clan moved in two decades ago, it's been repurposed as a barracks for the Clan's demihuman employees.

Creatures. Unless they have been summoned to another part of the dungeon, there are two **bugbears** here.

Treasure. Each footlocker contains extra blankets, a backpack, 3 torches, a tinderbox, 10 days of rations, and a waterskin. The bugbears carry 2d6 sp and 1 *potion of healing* each.

5 - BLACK ROSE BARRACKS

There are five cots in this clean area, each with its own footlocker. A simple table is tucked into the northeastern corner of the room.

Unless they were called to area 1, there are two **bandits** here. Otherwise, the bandits are relaxing when the characters enter this chamber.

Treasure. Each footlocker contains extra blankets, a backpack, 3 torches, a tinderbox, 10 days of rations, and a waterskin. The bandits carry 1d4 gp each.

6 - PIT TRAP

Twenty feet from the door that leads to area 1, there is a covered pit trap. If a character steps onto the space with the trap, the floor dumps them ten feet down into the pit and they take 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall. The trapdoor then closes. Opening the trapdoor from within the pit is difficult. A character must first scale the walls, which requires a successful DC 11 Strength (Athletics) check. Then, they must make another DC 14 Strength check to pry the door open. If they fail this check by 5 or more, they lose their footing and fall back into the pit and take falling damage again.

A creature outside the trap door can use its action to push the door open with a pole, weapon with reach, or another tool without falling into the pit. If the trap door is open, a creature inside can climb out through the hole without making the second Strength check.

A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception or Survival) check reveals a distinct lack of foot traffic through this area. Then, a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check made near the edge of the pit reveals the pit's opening.

Once the characters know about the pit, they can jump over it without triggering it. Once every 1d4 days, the dungeon's denizens check the pit to see if anyone has fallen into it. Otherwise, they totally avoid the area.

7 - PRISON

This large hall splits into three corridors that lead east, west, and south. There is a door to the north.

You hear coughing and groaning down the south corridor, likely coming from one or more of the four doors on either side.

The door that leads to area 1 is kept locked and can only be opened with a key.

Creatures. Two **bandits**, members of Black Rose Clan, keep watch in this area. If a fight breaks out, one rushes to area 5 to get help (assuming that those bandits are still there). The bandits are fanatically loyal to Black Rose Clan and fight to the death.

Cells. The doors leading to areas 8-10 are all locked. Those areas are used to store the prisoners. The keys to each of the cells are kept on a ring that hangs next to the door on the northern wall.

If the characters are defeated at some point during the adventure, they awaken in one of the cells (areas . All of their equipment and gear is kept among the supplies in area 3.

Stone Block Trap. At the location marked "b" on the map, there is a stone block trap. There is a pressure plate built into the floor. If a creature steps onto the plate, a 1 ton block of stone measuring 4-feet by 4-feet by 8-inches drops from the ceiling. A creature standing in the space below the stone must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. On a successful save, the creature can choose to be pushed 5 feet back or to the side of the block. A creature that chooses not to be pushed suffers the consequences of a failed saving throw.

On a failed save, the block falls on the creature and the creature takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage. The block shatters on impact.

A character who succeeds on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a lack of foot traffic in this section of the hall. If a character makes a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they discover the pressure plate in the floor and/or the stone block held in the ceiling. A successful DC 11 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools disables the trap.

8 - SLAVE PEN

The door to this area is locked.

This dark room holds six exhausted-looking humanoids. They are unarmed and do not appear to be hostile. Judging by the lacerations on their arms, back, and faces, the other denizens of the dungeon have been using them as punching bags.

There are six slaves in this area.

9 - SLAVE PEN

The door to this area is locked.

Five humanoids huddle against the western wall of this room. They look tired and malnourished.

All five humanoids are slaves. One of them is one of the Lagakou children, Mikel. Just before the characters arrived, Mikel's sister Aspa was taken away by a man in a golden mask. Although Mikel doesn't know where they took him, the other slaves believe they may have taken her to the "market" in the caverns.

10 - TORTURE CHAMBER

This room is dressed with all sorts of gruesome-looking devices. Against the wall are three iron coffins lined with rusty-looking nails pointing inward. At the center of the room is a rack with two rollers at each end. Both rollers have leather straps used to bind a victim's legs and feet. There is also a 4-foot-tall pole with manacles. A few feet from the pole is a table with whips, rods, and other torture devices.

The floor is dark red with blood stains.

This room was a torture chamber during the time of the dragons. However, Black Rose Clan doesn't see a need to use the room anymore. After all, they want their "product" healthy before they sell it. Still, the room will likely give the characters the impression that the room is still in use.

Barred Door. The door that leads to area 22 is barred from this side. After Black Rose Clan discovered the gargoyles from 22, they barred this door and the other door leading to area 22 to prevent their spread.

11 - CHUTE TRAP

When the characters walk down the hallway, read the description below:

At the south end of the hallway, there is a six-foot-tall statue of a dragon, likely put there when this place was first built. Now, the dungeon's inhabitants use it as a place to hang various bags, sheathed weapons, and other random equipment.

The 20-foot stretch of floor in front of the statue is actually a steel chute painted to look like stone tiles. If any weight is applied to the chute, it drops suddenly at a 45 degree angle toward the statue. Any creature standing on the chute when this happens must make a DC 10 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (creatures) choice or slide 20-feet toward the statue. They finally stop at a secret compartment hidden below the statue. Once weight is removed from the chute, it returns to its original position. A creature inside the compartment is effectively trapped and can't get out by nonmagical means unless the chute is lowered by another creature. The compartment can hold up to one Large creature or four Medium or Small creatures. Black Rose Clan members check the compartment once every 1d4 days to see if there is anyone trapped inside.

The items hung on the statue are all props. The bags are stuffed with dirty rags and the weapons in the sheathes are all rusted, broken, and otherwise useless.

A character recognizes the floor is fake with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check. The slaves in area 12 also know about the chute trap.



12 - SLAVE PEN

The first thing you notice is the smell of human waste. All around this room are seven disheveled humanoids who don't look like they've eaten in a few days. When they see you, they beg you to help them.

The seven humanoids are slaves. Older and weaker than the others, Black Rose Clan have had trouble selling this group. If they remain in this cell any longer, it's likely that Black Rose Clan will euthanize the bunch by feeding them to saber-toothed tigers in area 20.

13 - COMMON ROOM

This large room hosts three 20-foot long tables each with benches on either side. A small hearth is set into the southeastern wall. A pot that emits a pleasing aroma cooks over a fire.

Two women stand over the pot, sampling the contents with a long handled spoon. The first woman is thin with wirey hair and long-pointed ears. The second woman is shorter and thicker with a pleasant smile and button nose. They both wear simple clothing and no shoes.

The two women are **green hags**, Vera Frogwort's sisters. The taller of the two is Wild Darlene and the shorter, heavyset woman is Effie Saltfiddle. If the characters made a lot of noise before they entered this area, there is a good chance that these two women retreated to area 14.

If the characters approach them, they don't attack. Instead, they explain that they are nothing more than slaves themselves, held captive by Black Rose Clan. Their job is to serve the Clan's guards.

If the characters attempt to save the women, they agree to come along, maintaining their illusory appearance. They know where all the traps are within the dungeon and how to avoid them. They will try to lead the characters into traps.

Once their cover is blown, the two women use their Invisible Passage feature to flee, taking refuge in either area 14 or 15. If cornered, they unlock the door to area 20 and allow the three saber-toothed tigers within to attack the characters.

Bolted Door. The door to the southwest is bolted from this side. If it is opened, the two **saber-toothed tigers** spring out and attack the first humanoid they can reach.

Secret Door. There is a secret door in the western wall. Noticing the door requires a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check. Then, to open the door, a character must succeed on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check to find the latch that opens it.

14 - HIDDEN SHRINE

When the characters first enter this area, read the following:

You push open the secret passage. Within, you find a room with 15-foot high ceilings. A statue of a dragon stands in an alcove at the far, west end of the room. Murals on the wall depict images of hundreds of red dragons rolling around on top of each other like a nest of snakes. Over top of the dragon murals, someone has drawn all sorts of strange, arcane symbols.

Various animal pelts cover the floor at the southeastern end of the room, just before the steps that lead up to the statue's dais.

Creatures. Vera Frogwort, Wild Darlene, and Effie Saltfiddle (all **green hags**) have claimed this secret shrine as their bed chambers. If the characters haven't encountered these women yet, one or more of them are here. Like many of the guards here, the hags would prefer to take the characters alive.

Hag Spells. If there is only one or two of them here, the hags will use bribes or deception to convince the characters to let them go and will only resort to combat if they have no other option. However, if all three are present, they combine their powers to cast spells. While the three hags are within 30 feet of each other, they can cast the following spells from the wizard's spell list, but most share the spell slots among themselves:

- 1st level (4 slots): *identify*, *sleep*
- 2nd level (3 slots): *hold person*, *locate object*
- 3rd level (2 slots): *bestow curse*, *counterspell*

For casting these spells, each hag is a 5th-level spellcaster that uses Intelligence as her spellcasting ability (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks).

Treasure. Hidden among the furs of the hags' "bed", the characters will find 30 gp, a golden bracelet worth 40 gp, three bloodstones worth 50 gp each, and a *deck of illusions*. All three hags carry bags that hold 35 gp, 1d4 random trinkets, and a *wand of magic detection* each.

15 - ARMORY

Judging by the dozens of weapons and shields lining the wall and suits of armor hung on mannequins, this is the dungeon's armory.

Creatures. An **ogre** and two **bandits** are here when the characters arrive. While the bandits are hesitant, the ogre attacks without question. Once the fight is underway, one of the bandits flees to area 16 to get the attention of the officers.

Treasure. The armory contains the following weapons and armor:

- 5 maces
- 5 longswords
- 5 scimitars
- 5 shortswords

- 10 spears
- 2 heavy crossbows
- 5 light crossbows
- 50 crossbow bolts (kept in a case)
- 2 suits of splint mail
- 5 suits of leather armor
- 5 shields

In addition, the ogre and two bandits each have a pouch containing 3d10 sp.

16 - HALLWAY

This narrow hallway connects the armory to the officers' quarters (areas 17 and 18). There is nothing else of interest here.

17 - NOLAN'S QUARTERS

This 20-foot square room features a comfortable-looking bed, wooden chest, and small desk.

Creature. The captain of this sect of Black Rose Clan lives in this room. If a fight breaks out in the armory (see area 16), Nolan grabs his bow and heads there. Nolan is a lawful evil human **veteran** who wields a shortbow instead of a heavy crossbow which he can make two attacks with using his multiattack action. The tips of his arrows are poisoned. On a hit, a target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. The target takes 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Treasure. In addition to extra blankets, 10 days worth of rations, and a waterskin, Nolan keeps a coin purse with 50 gp in the chest in his room and two *potions of healing*. Nolan also carries three vials of the same poison he applies to his arrows and the keys to all of the rooms in the dungeon (except for the key to area 19).

18 - STOSHA'S QUARTERS

This 20-foot square room is a cluttered mess. Trash, wasted food, dirty linens cover every available surface including the small bed, desk, and chest.

Stosha, the captain of the demi-humans, lives here. When the characters arrive, it is unlikely that she is here. Instead, she can be found in area 25 overseeing the trade.

Treasure. If a character spends 10 minutes searching through the rubbish, on a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check they find a pouch with 10 gp and two *potions of healing* shoved under Stosha's bed.

19 - ANTECHAMBER

The doors to this area are magically locked as the *arcane lock* spell. The command word "Defroksanz" opens either door.

The statue in the hallway just before the area's easternmost

door is carved into the likeness of Defroksanz with his name written in Draconic at the base.

This huge chamber is dressed with a long red carpet that stretches from the door at the east end of the room to the 20-foot-wide staircase at the west end. Four colossal pillars carved to look like dragons hoist the 20-foot-high ceilings above. Spaced along the northern and southern walls are six suits of humanoid armor decorated to make the wearer look like a drakeblood. Each one holds a longsword in front of its chest.

Creatures. The six suits of armor are actually **animated armor**. The suits attack any creature that enters this area that fails to properly identify itself. Only the green hags from area 14 and Kragen from area 25 are permitted access. The animated armor suits all wield longswords.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage, or 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage when wielded with two hands).

Staircase Down. The stairs lead down to another layer of Quabus. This section of the dungeon is detailed in the next part of the *Slave Lords of Quabus* adventure path, *Secrets of the Dungeon Quabus*.

20 – TIGER PEN

If anyone opens the door to area 20 from area 13 without first checking what's behind the door, read the following:

Two large cats the size of horses growl at you. Fangs the length of shortwords jut from the top of their jaws. Without hesitation, they pounce!

The two **saber-toothed tigers** are hungry and vicious. They attack any creature they can get their paws on. If reduced to half their hit points or more, they retreat.

21 – TIGER KING

This 30-foot-wide rotunda boasts a large, circular couch at its center. Roughly 20 feet behind the couch there is a barred window.

If the characters haven't encountered the saber-toothed tigers yet, the three beasts are visible behind the bars.

Creature. Unless the tigers already escaped, the tiger's caretaker Jayo (NE male elf **spy**) is facing the tigers with his back to the door. If the characters are quiet, they might be able to sneak up on Jayo. When Jayo sees the characters, he quickly realizes that he's outnumbered and offers a parlay. Jayo knows most of what's going on in Quabus and can share information with most of the areas with the exceptions of areas 14, 19, 22, 23, and 24. "Those spots are off-limits," he claims.

Jayo swears that he only takes care of the tigers. However,

he's also the one responsible for feeding "expired inventory" (aka unsold slaves) to the tigers. Jayo is a despicable Anorian elf who will betray the characters the first chance he gets.

22 – GARGOYLE PIT

The doors leading into this area from area 10 and the western hallway have been barred from the outside the room; the doors leading to 23 are open. The statue at the end of the hallway near this room's westernmost door is carved in the likeness of the dragon Defroksanz. His name is written in Draconic at the base.

When the characters enter this chamber, read the following:

This unusually shaped room is dark and dusty. At the center of the room, there are three statues carved in the likeness of dragons, all casting their gaze down a 20-foot-long, 10-foot wide uncovered pit. It's hard to tell how deep the pit is.

There are two stone doors in the western wall carved with reliefs depicting more dragons. A narrow hallway branches east from the northeast corner of the room, disappearing into darkness.

Creatures. The three statues are actually **gargoyles**. As servants of Defroksanz and the Great Chromatics, they have the appearance of dragons. When a character comes near, they attack.

Pit. The pit at the center of the room descends 100-feet below this level dungeon into a 30-foot wide cavern where more six more gargoyles live. If the gargoyles that are already here are killed or retreat, the gargoyles from the pit might fly up and assist their brethren.

23 – UVRAURR'S CHAMBER

Dust and cobwebs blanket every surface of this dark room. At the center of the room, a 12-foot tall statue of a dragon stands with its wings outstretched and claws out. It is flanked by two shorter statues of dragons, both with similar poses.

Creatures. The larger of the three statues is Uvraurr, a **greater gargoyle** (see the *Monsters of Quabus* supplement for details). He is joined by two **gargoyle** servants. As soon as the characters come near, they reveal their true nature. Uvraurr is a powerful elemental creature. And he is smart, too. Although he knows that he and his minions could easily destroy the characters, he is more interested in learning about the slave pits. He offers the characters a chance to share what they know about the slave pits and its inhabitants in exchange for their lives. If they refuse, he commands the gargoyles to kill the weakest looking member of their party. Uvraurr speaks and understands Common.

"And don't stop once it falls down," the giant gargoyle adds with a smirk. "Tear its pink and red guts open and spread them

over the floor.”

If the characters are cooperative, he spares them. His fight is with Black Rose Clan and the other demihumans. He wants vengeance and doesn't want to tire himself or his minions out by fighting a group of well-trained adventurers.

“Feel free to join us,” chuckles the giant gargoyle as it heads for the nearest exit.

The gargoyles head for area 25. If the characters follow, the gargoyles help break up the trade negotiations.

Secret Door. There is a large, red curtain that covers the eastern wall. Behind the curtain hides a simple wooden door. The door used to be locked, but it appears that it's been broken open.

24 – SECRET WORKSHOP

At one end of this room there is a workbench with a chair. A cobweb covered skeleton still sits at the desk, its head lying in an open book.

Near the skeleton is a shelf stuffed with dusty tombs. Another table against the opposite wall displays all sorts of tools and trinkets.

This small alchemical lab was once used by Defroksanz's alchemist Louwen to develop poisons and alchemist fire for the troops. Lacking a key or a way to escape the room, Louwen died when none of the dragons or their minions returned from battle.

Treasure. The book that Louwen is reading is a spellbook that contains the following spells: 1st level—*burning hands*, *comprehend languages*, *identify*, *illusory script*; 2nd—*darkness*, *detect thoughts*, *flaming sphere*; 3rd—*clairvoyance*. There are 25 books on the shelves. Together, they are worth 100 gp to an alchemist. Finally, the tools and trinkets on the other table have enough components for a full set of alchemist's supplies.

25 – SLAVE MARKET

Unless the villains in this area have been alerted to the presence of the characters, they are in the middle of trade negotiations when the characters arrive.

This large, well-lit cavern is divided by a slow-moving stream that runs north to south through the natural stone. Three large rowboats are pulled up to the easternmost bank, each with its own rower.

At the center of the room, a group of well-dressed figures examines four down-trodded humanoids wearing manacles almost like they were cattle. Meanwhile, a tall, gray-skinned

man in a golden mask watches from the side. He is flanked by a hobgoblin woman wearing full plate armor and an orc holding a huge maul over his shoulder.

“Well, my lords? What do you think of our latest inventory?” asks the man in the mask. “Worth your time, no? Shall we start the bids, yes?”

Creatures. The man in the golden mask is actually a **mask haunt** named Kragen (see the Monsters of Quabus supplement for statistics). Kragen is protected by the demihuman captain Stosha (LE female hobgoblin **knight**) and her right hand man Astagar, an **orc**. See the sidebar for the changes to these NPCs' stats.

Kragen is in the middle of a sale for the four slaves. Three are adults (**commoners**) and the third is the child, Aspa Lakagou.

The four buyers are:

- Peng Xun, a female **vampire spawn** from Xenem
- Qin Wei, a lawful evil male dragonborn **noble** from Aegreya
- Stekker, a lawful evil male **cult fanatic** from Steel Church
- Faces, a **doppelganger** from Arruquetta in the form of a female human

The men manning the rowboats are all members of Black Rose Clan (LE human **bandits**).

Kragen and the four buyers prefer not to get their hands dirty. If the characters make their presence known, Kragen casts invisibility on himself and flees. Kragen's goal is to make it back to the chambers and flee to area 19. If caught, he will not reveal anything about the dungeon.



STOSHA AND ASTAGAR

Stosha uses the **knight** stat block, except with the following changes, which makes her CR 4 (1,100 XP):

- Stosha is lawful evil.
- Stosha has darkvision out to 60 ft.
- **New Trait: Martial Advantage.** Once per turn, Stosha can deal an extra 10 (3d6) damage to a creature she hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of Stosha that isn't incapacitated.

Astagar uses the **orc** stat block, except with the following changes, which makes his CR 1 (200 XP):

- Astagar has 37 hp (5d8 + 15)
- **New Action: Multiattack.** Astagar makes two maul attacks.
- **Maul. Melee Weapon Attack:** +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Meanwhile, the four buyers escape via the rowboats while Stosha and Astagar charge. They follow the stream south. If cornered, they fight—none of them wish to be caught purchasing slaves in The Summer Land, a crime punishable by death.

When a fight breaks out, Stosha calls on the extra **guards** waiting in area 26 to join them. Kragen's guards and the buyers aren't above taking hostages to escape the dungeon. If a villain takes a hostage, they gain three-quarters cover against attack rolls (+5 bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws). If an attack made against them misses their AC but is still higher than 10 (a slave's AC), the attack hits the hostage instead of the villain.

Wrath of the Gargoyles. If the characters freed Uvraurr and his minions from areas 22 and 23, the characters find the stone dragons here hiding in the shadows. Almost as soon as the characters arrive, they attack Kragen and the other slavers. However, they see no reason to protect the slaves. And, if pressed, take no issue with attacking the characters either.

Treasure. If Kragen is defeated, the remaining parts of his mask are worth 100 gp. The bandits, Stosha, and Astagar all have leather pouches which contain 2d10 gp each. Each buyer, if caught, carries a coin purse with 4d6 gp, their budget.

26 – GUARD ROOM

During trades, this large cavern is manned by four additional guards to ensure that trades go off without a hitch.

Treasure. Each **guard** carries a coin purse with 2d4 sp.

27 – SLICK PASSAGE

The floor here slopes to the north. The humidity makes the ground slick. A creature moving across the stones must

succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone. A creature removing through the area at half speed doesn't need to make the save.

28 – CROCODILE BANK

This part of the cavern is home to a pair of **crocodiles**. They keep a nest nearby hidden in a cove of stalagmites. If the characters aren't careful entering this area on foot, the crocodiles mistake the characters for egg snatchers and attack. Otherwise, the crocodiles ignore most creatures who pass through, including those heading downstream.

29 – OLD ROWBOAT

A rowboat riddled with holes has been pulled up onto the slick stones of this cavern. You can see what appears to be a humanoid skeleton sitting in the boat.

A **swarm of centipedes** lives in the skeleton's rib cage and attacks anyone who messes with the boat or the body.

Treasure. The skeleton wears a jeweled scabbard. The leather of the scabbard is ruined, but the three gems (banded agate, moss gate, and turquoise) are worth 10 gp each.

30 – SANDY CAVERN

This cavern's floors are thick with wet sand. Treat the area as difficult terrain.

There is nothing of value here.

31 – SOUTH STREAM

The stream that slides through Quabus continues southward through the cavern. After 3,000 feet, it reemerges into daylight south of the property, and after another 20 miles, the stream reconnects with the River Zarathos. Kragen's customers use this route to avoid detection.

32 – STIRGE CAVERN

This large, dark cavern stretches beyond your field of vision in all directions. The ceilings here are 20-feet high and covered in stalactites whose twin sits below them on the floor.

The cave would be somewhat breathtaking if it wasn't for the large mounds of white animal feces all around you.

Creatures. There are 12 **stirges** on the ceiling of this cavern. If the characters are noisy while they pass through the area, the stirges wake and attack. Stirges only feed until they are sated, then return to digest their intake. They fear fire, and will avoid any creature holding a torch.

33 – DOWN RAMP

The path ahead of you is littered with loose scree and animal bones. It descends at a sharp angle, then vanishes into the

darkness beyond your field of vision.

This passageway leads away from Quabus into another area of The Low. Where it goes and who lives there is a story for another time.

WRAP-UP: FURTHER INTO QUABUS

The mystery of the dragon dungeon Quabus begins to unfold, possibly raising more questions than answering those that already exist. Likely, one or more of the villains from this adventure—the three hags or Kragen—vanish into area 19 and into the depths of Quabus' lower layers. Their stories resume in the follow-up adventure, *Secrets of the Dungeon Quabus*.

ADVENTURE HOOK RESOLUTIONS

There were three adventure hooks mentioned in the introduction. Here is the resolution for each adventure hook:

BELOW BLIRE MANOR

If the characters discover members of Black Rose Clan or the slavers below Blire Manor, this is all the information that Sir Martha needs to pursue a course of action at Blire Manor. She pays the characters what they're owed. Then, while she gathers reinforcements to storm the manor, she asks the characters to continue their mission and learn more about the dungeon and its lower layers.

FIND QUABUS

Discovering any of the dragon statues that bear the name Defroksanz is enough proof that the dungeon below Blire Manor is, in fact, the lost dragon dungeon Quabus. He pays the characters 200 gp, but offers an extra 2,000 gp for detailed maps of the dungeon.

WHERE ARE THE LAGAKOU CHILDREN?

If the characters find the Lagakou children and return them, their parents are eternally grateful. And although the Lagakous lack the funds to pay the characters, the good deed is enough to earn all good-aligned characters in the party inspiration.

RESTING DURING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure features many combat encounters and dangerous traps. As such, the characters will frequently need to escape and rest. Each time they leave the dungeon, there is a chance that Kragen, Vera, and the others descend deeper into the dungeon to avoid the authorities. However, they won't do so right away. At your discretion, Black Rose Clan hires an additional 2d6 **bandits** and spreads them throughout the dungeon. Each bandit carries 2d6 sp on them.

ADVANCEMENT

By the adventure's conclusion, the characters should earn enough experience points to earn enough experience to reach the 4th level, even if they did not play through the previous adventure in this adventure series. Ω



OPEN GAMING LICENSE

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other forms in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphics, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.
2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.
3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.
4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.
5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License
6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.
7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title, and interest in and to that Product Identity.
8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.
9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.
10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.
11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.
12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.
13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.
14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.
15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc. System Reference Document 5.0 Copyright 2016, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford, Chris Perkins, Rodney Thompson, Peter Lee, James Wyatt, Robert J. Schwalb, Bruce R. Cordell, Chris Sims, and Steve Townshend, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

END OF LICENSE



SECRETS OF QUABUS

FIFTH EDITION COMPATIBLE

The second level of the dangerous dragon dungeon Quabus tests the smarts and durability of all who enter.
Featuring art by Tim Hartin and Paper Forge.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Adventure Primer	3
Background	3
Violent Delights	4
Arrival	4
General Features	4
Map of Dungeon Quabus Level 2 by Tim Hartin	6
Keyed Locations	7
Wrap-Up: Dead But Not Gone	20
Open Gaming License	21



INTO QUABUS

This adventure is the third part of four in the *Into Quabus* adventure path which takes characters from 3rd level to 7th level.

Part 1. Danger at Blire Manor. A gang of mercenaries draws attention to itself when it starts operating out of old Blire Manor.

Part 2. Prisoners of Quabus. In the old dragon dungeon Quabus, villains capture innocents around the countryside and imprison them in their wicked dungeon..

Part 3. Secrets of Quabus. Deeper into the old dragon dungeon Quabus, a great evil stirs.

Part 4. Assault on Quabus. A war is brewing in the dragon dungeon Quabus.

CREDITS

This adventure was a collaborative effort brought to you by these awesome folks:

Producers: The DMDave Team

Story and Mechanics: [DMDave](#)

Proofing: Benjamin "Sarge" Gilyot

Cover Illustrator: Shutterstock

Cartography: [Tim Hartin](#)

Interior Illustrations: [Paper Forge](#) and Shutterstock

Additional Support: The DMDave Team

Special Thanks: A big thanks to our friends at *Wizards of the Coast* for making the coolest game in the world and allowing creators like ourselves to borrow your open license.

HOW TO RUN THIS ADVENTURE

To properly run this adventure, you need the Fifth Edition core rulebooks.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their character first arrive at a location or under a specific circumstance, as described in the text.

The core 5e monster book contains stat blocks for most of the creatures found in this adventure. When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block in the core monster book. If the monster is not included in the core monster book, text in parenthesis point to the monster's source.

Spells and equipment mentioned in the adventure are described in the core player's rulebook. Magic items are described in the core GM's guide.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used throughout this adventure:

hp	hit points	LG	Lawful good
AC	Armor Class	CG	Chaotic good
DC	Difficulty Class	NG	Neutral good
XP	experience points	LN	Lawful neutral
pp	platinum piece(s)	N	Neutral
gp	gold piece(s)	CN	Chaotic neutral
ep	electrum piece(s)	LE	Lawful evil
sp	silver piece(s)	NE	Chaotic evil
cp	copper piece(s)	NE	Neutral evil
NPC	nonplayer character		



ADVENTURE PRIMER

Secrets of Quabus is a Fifth Edition adventure designed for **three to six 4th to 4th-level characters**, and it is optimized for a party of **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 4**. By the adventure's conclusion, the characters should easily achieve the 5th level (if not 6th). The adventure takes place in the campaign world of

Omeria in The Summer Land, but can easily be placed into any setting where an old manor with a large, underground location would fit in without too much adjustment.

This adventure is the continuation of *Danger at Blire Manor* and *Prisoners of Quabus*. However, it can be played as a one-shot adventure or as part of the greater series, *Into Quabus*.

BACKGROUND

Thirty years ago, a dangerous drakeblood priest named Skuvan the Firesoul discovered the ruins of his great grandfather Defroksanz's dungeon Quabus. Skuvan believed that Quabus was his birthright. With the help of allies throughout The Summer Land and Northern Omeria, he would revive the dragon dungeon and use it as a base of operations. From there, Skuvan and his armies would rise up and seek revenge for those who cast out his ancestors, the Great Chromatics.

First, he employed Greatwell's Black Rose Clan to hide the entrance to the dungeon. By extorting a local Tomydon Prince, one of his lieutenants, a hag named Vera Frogwort, had a manor built over the entrance to the dungeon.

Next, Skuvan needed workers. He purchased the efforts of evil demihumans and other foul creatures in the area to work in the dungeon.

Skuvan is ready to carry out his final plan: the rebirth of his great grandfather Defroksanz, a young red dragon. Having recovered all of Defroksanz's bones from the Pressonian History Museum in Greatwell, Skuvan hopes to use a black necromantic ritual to return the red dragon to life. Of course,

the unnatural return of a red dragon could mean certain doom for The Summer Land and its people. In fact, Skuvan is counting on it.

Unfortunately for Skuvan and his wicked plans, the Pressonian Knights in the region have discovered the old dragon dungeon. Will Skuvan bring his grandfather back to life before a band of heroes discovers the secrets of the dungeon Quabus? Or will the Pressonians rid their countryside of dragons once and for all?

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The following plot hooks provide some possible ways for the characters to enter the Lower Levels of Quabus.

INTO QUABUS

If the characters discovered the existence of Quabus in the adventure path Into Quabus—first with Blire Manor and then with Prisoners of Quabus—they can continue deeper into the dungeon. The only way to enter the lower levels of Quabus is via the staircase in area 19 of the Prison of Quabus.

MAPS OF QUABUS

A noble by the name of Keshud Bosteid (LN male human **noble**) recently hired a group of adventurers to explore the ruins beneath old Blire Manor. Within, they found an entrance to the lost dragon dungeon Quabus. Now, Bosteid asks the characters to enter Quabus and delve deeper into its layers, offering 2,000 gp to the party if they can bring back detailed maps.

DEFROKSANZ'S BONES

Someone broke into the Pressonian History Museum in Greatwell and stole a crate containing the bones of the Great Chromatic Defroksanz. Supposedly, the mercenaries who stole the bones hide them in the ruins of Old Blire Manor. The Museum's owner, Qiu Xiang, is offering a 2,500 gp reward to anyone who can return the bones.



VIOLENT DELIGHTS

The Dungeon Quabus (the Draconic word for “bone breaker”) descends close to a mile below the surface of Omeria. Its original entrance is obscured by a four-story mansion 20 miles north of the River Zarathos. The mansion, once owned by an important Tomydon Prince named Dunkirk Blire, has been empty for two decades.

The first layer of the Quabus is its prison. When the dungeon reopened, the criminal organization Black Rose Clan stored captured locals on this level. Skuvan had the first pick of the prisoners, using them for his dark rituals. Then, the remaining prisoners were offered to cannibals and other tyrants around Omeria. Those they didn’t use were fed to a pair of savage tigers. The prison operations were overseen by the green hag Vera Frogwort (the collector) and the wraith Kragen (the seller). If the characters played through the previous adventure, Prisoners of Quabus, it’s possible that both these villains escaped capture and fled to the second layer.

The second layer of Quabus is nicknamed “Violent Delights.” Defroksanz would imprison his enemies on this layer and, along with his friends and allies, watch them suffer through its many traps and dangers. Those who wished to avoid the dangers on the layer would pass through to the third level by way of the Peaceful Walk (area 27).

When the characters finally reach Violent Delights, they discover a dangerous, neglected death trap. The strategically placed creatures who once protected specific areas of the level now lurk and hunt where they please. The handful of traps that remain active sometimes malfunction, resulting in even worse conditions than before.

Although Skuvan and his minions plan to use Violent Delight’s scrying temple (area 40) to resurrect Defroksanz, they refuse to travel beyond those chambers. To prevent

intrusion during his ceremony, Skuvan has warded the path between the layer’s entrance from above and his final location. However, his wards aren’t perfect. There are still some corridors of the dungeon layer that connect to the scrying temple. He hopes that the guards stationed throughout the level as well as the dungeon’s natural dangers will handle any unnecessary distractions. It’s now up to the adventurers to find that path and stop Skuvan before Defroksanz is brought back to The Real.

ARRIVAL

If the characters played through the first two chapters of Into Quabus, likely they discovered the staircase that leads down to Violent Delights in area 19 of the prison. However, if this is the characters’ first experience with the Into Quabus adventure path, you can have them circumvent the first layer and explain that the stairs below Old Blire Manor lead directly into Violent Delights.

GENERAL FEATURES

Unless stated otherwise, this layer of Quabus has the following features.

CEILINGS, FLOORS, AND WALLS

Quabus’ chambers were hewn from the stone and loose earth below the region where Old Blire Manor now stands. The walls, floors, and ceilings were then dressed with limestone stone bricks. The ceilings are 10 feet high in passages and 15 feet high in chambers and braced with timbers. Doorways are 7-feet high and 4-feet wide to allow for the dungeon’s larger patrons to pass through unhindered. Thanks to frequent earthquakes in the region, cracks in the ceilings, floors, and walls are common.

DOORS

All of the dungeon's doors are made from solid oak and hung on iron hinges (AC 15, 25 hp, immunity to poison and psychic damage). At the center of each door is a small window that allows creatures to view whatever is on the other side of the door. Most of the doors can be locked. A locked door can be broken open by a character who uses their action to make a successful DC 17 Strength check. Or a character can use his or her action to make a DC 15 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools to pick the lock.

Some of the doors have been arcane locked by Skuvan. Arcane locked doors have AC 25, 50 hp (damage threshold 10), and immunity to damage made by nonmagical attacks. Magically locked doors require a successful DC 27 Strength check to break down or DC 25 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools to pick the lock.

Repeat Break-in Attempts. If a character fails to break a door down, they cannot try again without the help of another creature or a special tool, such as a crowbar.

ENCHANTMENTS

Like many of the Great Chromatic's secret lairs, all of the dungeon's manmade chambers and passageways are protected from magic that would allow intruders to enter. Any spell that would allow a creature to enter or leave the dungeon or transport itself from one level to another such as astral projection, plane shift, teleport, or word of recall fail. Similarly, effects that banish creatures to another plane of existence do not work. These restrictions apply to magic items and artifacts as well. However, spells that allow movement between The Ethereal such as the etherealness spell still works.

Conjuration spells and other magical effects that summon creatures into the dungeon still function, as does magic that utilizes extradimensional space such as magnificent mansion or bags of holding. However, spells cast within those spaces are subjected to the same restrictions as the rest of the dungeon.

Finally, the dungeon, its contents, and any creature currently inside the dungeon cannot be detected by divination spells or magical effects used outside the dungeon. Spells such as locate object or scrying simply fail. The same goes for magic items that duplicate those effects or innate tracking features such as an invisible stalker's Faultless Tracker feature. However, all of these effects work so long as both the caster/user and target are inside the dungeon.

LIGHTS

Violent Delights has torches hung throughout, but very few are lit. The boxed text descriptions assume that the characters have darkvision or their own sources of light.

SOUNDS AND SMELLS

Overall, the dungeon is eerily quiet. The creatures who live within do their jobs to the best of their ability and don't make too much fuss while doing it. The entire dungeon is humid and warm, therefore, the smell of mold and animal waste is common throughout.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Violent Delights is overrun with many of the horrific creatures that Defroksanz once kept in the death trap. Many have escaped their old cells, propagated, and now roam the halls of the dungeon looking for food or creatures to torment.

Every 10 minutes that the characters spend roaming through this layer, roll a d20. On a result of 20, a random encounter happens. Choose a random encounter or roll randomly using the Violent Delights Random Encounter table below to determine the nature of the encounter.

VIOLENT DELIGHTS RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d8 Encounter

1 1d6 **animated armor**

2 1d6 + 1 **dust mephits**

3 3d6 **giant rats**

4 A **ghost** of one of the level's old spectators follows the characters around, watching them. It doesn't attack unless provoked.

5 1d4 **grimlocks**

6 1 **invisible stalker**

7 2d4 **orcs**

8 1d4 **skeletons** led by 1 **minotaur skeleton**

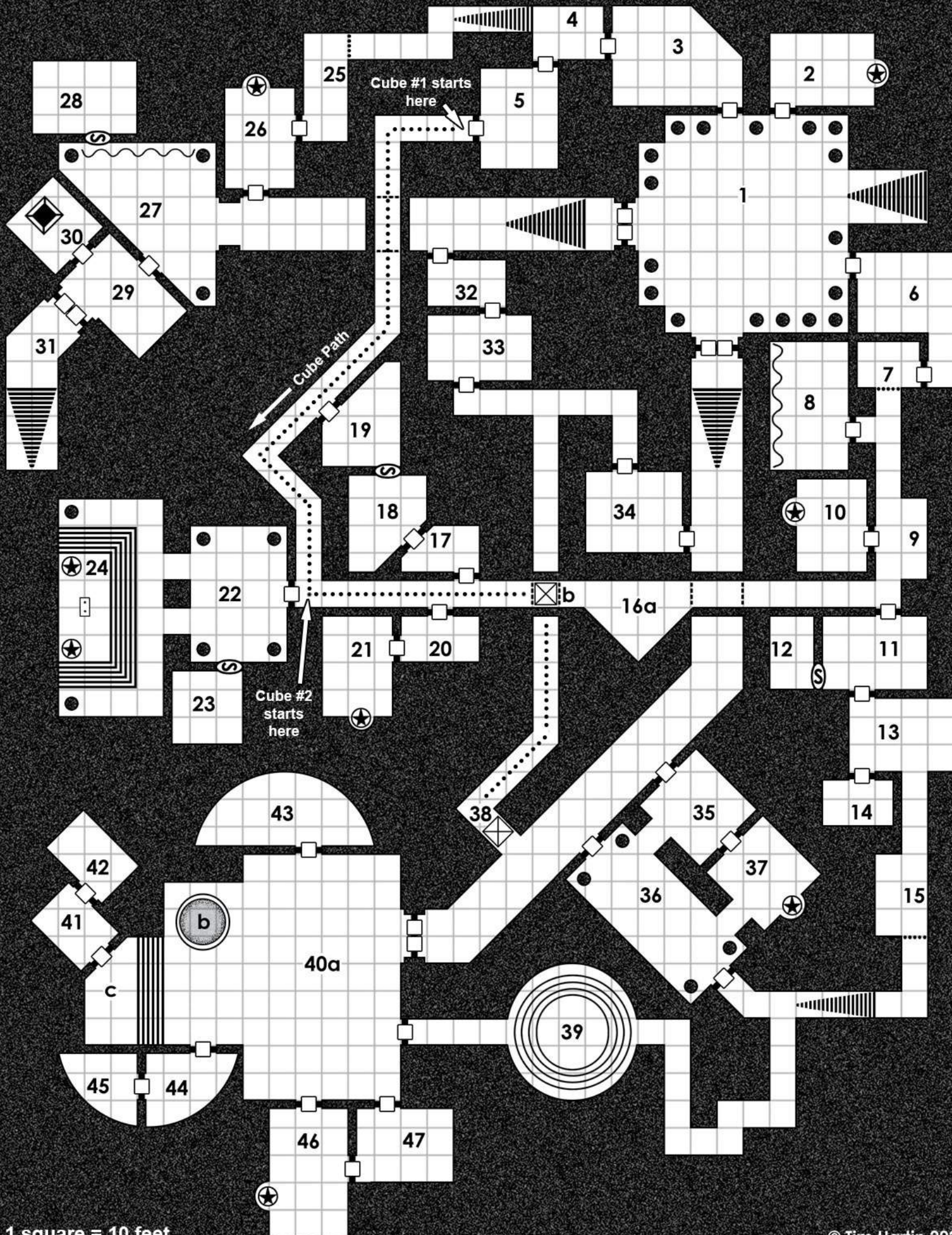
CUBE PATROL

There is a long hallway that stretches through the northern section of the complex. The hallway starts at area 5 and ends in area 9. At all times, this hallway is patrolled by two **gelatinous cubes**. The cubes follow the same path, albeit a few minutes apart from each other.

- A cube starts its patrol at the north end of the corridor just before the door to area 5.
- The cube travels south down the hallway at a rate of 20 feet per round.
- After one minute of traveling, the cube reaches the corner in front of the door to area 22. It then continues east.
- Eventually, the cube falls into the concealed pit at 16b, tumbling into the corridor directly below it. It takes no damage from the fall, but pauses for 1 round due to "shock."
- The cube continues along the lower corridor toward area 38 on the map.
- Then, the cube falls into the pit at area 38. The pit teleports it back to the north end of the upper corridor just before the door to area 5. The cube repeats the cycle.

It takes a cube approximately 2 minutes (20 rounds) to complete the cycle. The two cubes are always spaced roughly 1 minute (10 rounds or 200 feet) apart from each other. If a cube is destroyed, a new one magically appears in the corridor by the door to area 5 so long as the second cube is either a) missing/destroyed or b) currently by the door to area 22. The cubes do not stop their cycle, even if there is a creature nearby.

When the characters enter the hallway for the first time, assume that one cube is in front of the door to area 5, and the second is in front of the door to area 22. For simplicity's



1 square = 10 feet

© Tim Hartin 2020

sake, the cubes always act on initiative count 6 (losing initiative ties). If you wish to choose a random location for the cubes, roll a d20 and multiply it by 10. This is the distance in squares on the map on page 6 that the cubes have traveled.

KEYED LOCATIONS

The locations detailed below are keyed to the map of Violent Delights on page 6.

1 - ENTRANCE

When the characters first enter this area, read the following:

You descend the stairs and enter a massive chamber with huge, 20-foot high cathedral ceilings. Although the chamber vanishes into darkness at the east and south, what you can see impresses you. Frescoes of dragons being worshipped by humanoids fill every possible nook and cranny. The thick columns that line the walls of this chamber are carved to look like dragons, too.

Just ahead you notice four humanoids wearing armor reminiscent of dragons, each one mounted on a huge lizard.

SKU VAN'S GUARDS

Medium encounter

There are five elven **guards** mounted on **giant lizards**. Skuvan tasked these guards to attack any creatures who entered this chamber who did not look like they belonged in the dungeon. They are loyal to Skuvan and fight to the death.

The guards are armed with lances, which makes them CR 1/4 (50 XP).

Lance. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d12 + 1) piercing damage.

As elves, the guards have darkvision 60 ft., advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put them to sleep.

MAGICALLY LOCKED DOORS

The doors that lead to area 27 and the hallway between this area and area 40 are magically locked (see General Features).

FIRE TRAP DOOR

The door to area 6 is trapped. There is a pressure plate in the 5-foot square just before the door. If 20 pounds of weight or more is placed on the pressure plate, the heads of the dragons in the two columns flanking the door breathe fire, hitting everything in a 10-foot square directly in front of the door. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 10 (3d6) fire damage and catches on fire on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one and does not catch on fire. A creature on fire takes an additional 3 (1d6) at the start of each of their turns so long as they remain on fire. A creature that is on fire can use its action to make a DC 10 Dexterity check, smothering the flames on a success.

Countermeasures. Noticing the nozzles in the dragons' mouths on the column requires a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check.

A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check then notices how the trap functions with the pressure plate.

A character proficient in thieves' tools can plug the nozzles or make a successful DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to disable the pressure plate.

2 - MEPHIT CHAMBER

As soon as you enter this chamber, your senses are assaulted by thick dust that consumes the air. Although it's hard to see, it looks like this room was once a temple or shrine. At the opposite end of the room, a statue carved in the likeness of a dragon stands. Four, small winged creatures who look to be made of the same dust that fills the air climb over the statue, speaking among themselves in a strange language.

The four **dust mephits** here are speaking to each other in a hodgepodge of Auran and Terran. A character who speaks Primordial will understand much of what they say, but unless a character speaks both Auran and Terran it's tough to make out the full conversation.

Not that it matters: they're just discussing the nature of dust and decay.

CHATTY DUST MEPHITS

Easy encounter (avoidable)

The four dust mephits aren't outwardly dangerous. Previously servants of the earth elemental Rock, they've claimed this area as their own. They might be willing to part with the knowledge they have of the dungeon so long as the characters have something they are willing to trade.

As elementals, they aren't concerned about being destroyed as they'll eventually reform in The Rumble.

DUSTY AREA

The entire area is lightly obscured by the dust that lingers in the air.

TREASURE

The mephits have a small collection of gems they keep hidden behind the dragon statue on the eastern wall which they greedily guard. There are two garnets worth 100 gp, four pieces of quartz worth 50 gp each, and six lapis lazuli worth 10 gp each.

3 - BLADE ROOM

Much of the art that appears in other parts of this dungeon is largely absent here. Instead, there are various dragon heads carved into the south wall, each with its mouth open.

Abstract sculptures made of swords, axes, and other blades are placed at regular intervals throughout the room

This chamber has two doors—one in the south wall and one in the west.

BLADE TRAP

The moment a non-undead creature sets foot in this room, it triggers a blade trap. The blades “sculptures” start to spin, fanning out as they go. The only “safe” part of the room are the 10-foot squares immediately in front of the room’s two doors.

Have the characters roll initiative. The trap automatically acts on initiative count 20 and initiative count 10.

Spinning Blades. When a creature enters a space where the blades spin or if they start their turn in a space where the blades are spinning, they must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 7 (2d6) slashing damage on a hit or half as much damage on a successful saving throw.

Acceleration. On initiative count 10, the blades accelerate. The DC to avoid the blades increases by 2 and the damage they deal increases by 3 (1d6). This continues each round until the DC becomes 16 and the total damage dealt by the blades is 21 (5d6).

Gusts of Wind. On initiative count 20, the dragon’s mouths on the walls blast wind into the area. Roll 1d10 and refer to the Dragon Wind Direction table below to determine the direction the wind blows. The wind blows in a line that is up to 50 feet long and 10 feet wide of the given direction. Each creature that starts its turn in the line must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be pushed 15 feet away from the dragon’s mouths in a direction following the line.

DRAGON WIND DIRECTION

d10	Direction
1–2	North
3–4	South
5–6	East
7–8	West
9–10	Southwest

Any creature in the line must spend 2 feet of movement for every 1 foot it moves when moving closer to the source of the wind.

The wind disperses gas or vapors, and it extinguishes candles, torches, and similar unprotected flames in the area. It causes protected flames such as those of lanterns, to dance wildly and has a 50 chance to extinguish them.

The wind continues to blow in that direction until the next initiative count 20 when it changes directions (roll for a new direction).

Countermeasures. The easiest way to avoid the blades and wind is to climb on the ceiling. The blades do not reach the ceilings nor does the wind coming from the dragon mouths.

Each 10-foot square in the room, with the exception of the squares immediately in front of the doors, has its own blade apparatus. The blades can be attacked. Each apparatus has AC 15 and 15 hit points, resistance to piercing damage, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Attacking a blade is

dangerous, however. Any creature who makes a melee weapon attack against the blades automatically takes 3 (1d6) slashing damage. Each 10-foot square section of blades can also be disabled with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves’ tools (assuming the creature can actually get close enough without getting hit).

There is a dragon head built into each 10-foot section of wall in the room, with the exception of the sections with the doors. A creature with an object that they can stuff into the mouths of the dragons, such as a blanket or cloak, can use its action to make a DC 15 Strength check, plugging the hole as a result. The wind traps can also be disabled with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves’ tools.

4 – BLADE ROOM ANTECHAMBER

Three plush, dust-covered couches crowded around a large, low table fill the center of this room. To the west, a staircase descends down into darkness. There are two doors: one in the eastern wall and one to the south.

DRAGON BREATH TRAP

At the bottom of the staircase between areas 4 and 25 nozzles in the ceiling continuously emit fire filling the entire 40-foot by 10-foot area. The first time a creature enters the area or starts their turn in the area, it takes 7 (2d6) fire damage as a result of the flames.

Countermeasures. If a creature uses its action and makes a successful DC 10 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves’ tools, they can disable one 10 x 10 section of nozzles in the ceiling, ending the fire. The dragon statues in area 25 control the type of damage that the nozzles deal. More than one type of damage can happen at the same time and the damage they cause are cumulative (there are different sets of nozzles for each of the types of damage dealt. See area 25 for details.

5 – ROCK

This large chamber’s floors are covered in chunks of gray stone. From where you’re standing, it looks like there is something glittering among the rubble.

There are two bloodstones among the rocks.

ROCK

Hard encounter

The gems are actually the eyes of an **earth elemental** named Rock who was destroyed by the wraith Paper. If a living creature touches one of the gems, they must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. The creature takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a success. Once this happens, read the following:

You feel the red gem sapping your life. After a moment, it flies toward its twin, stopping just before it hits it.

The two then float a 8 feet above the floor, roughly 1 foot apart from each other. Then, all the rubble strewn on the floor starts to fly toward the gems, forming the outline of a creature around the gems, which inevitably become its eyes.

Once the rocks stop, a gem-eyed earth elemental stands before you. It looks angry.

Rock attacks the characters, assuming that they are servants of Paper or Scissors, his sworn enemies. During the fight, he frequently shouts in the Terran language, "You won't destroy me again, Paper! I will crush your humanoid servants as vengeance!"

If the characters defeat rock, he explodes into a pile of rubble once more with his bloodstone eyes lying in the mess. Until the bloodstones are destroyed, every time a living creature touches them he will reform.

6 - PAPER

The moment you set foot in this room, you feel the temperature drop. Your breath forms into fog and the hairs on the back of your arm and neck stand on end.

Cages hang on chains hung from the ceiling. The skeletal remains of their prisoners still sit in the cages, their eyeless sockets staring, mouths locked in agony.

Among the cages a slightly incorporeal creature floats roughly 2 feet off the floor. Although it has the crude outline of a humanoid, it lacks a face. Instead, it looks as if it's made from thin strips of paper bound together at the top of its "head". Each strip has arcane writing.

The creature turns its strange head toward you. It hisses in an echoey, disembodied voice, "Scissors must have sent you. Prepare to die."

PAPER

Hard encounter

The monster is a **wraith** named Paper. Paper loathes all life, but especially hates creatures that it believes works for its nemesis Scissors. If Paper is destroyed, he bursts into a pile of scrolls covered in unusual arcane writing. A successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the writing involves summoning a necromantic creature.

Among the scrolls there is a large moonstone the size of a fist. If a living creature touches the moonstone, it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. The creature takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one. Once this happens, read the following:

After the moonstone saps a portion of your life, it flies from your hand toward the center of the mess of papers littered on

the floor. In seconds, the scraps gather around the moonstone and recombine, forming the apparition once more.

It hisses in an echoey, disembodied voice, "Scissors must have sent you. Prepare to die."

Until the moonstone is destroyed, this happens every time someone touches it.

7 - VIEWING ROOM

This small chamber has three rows of benches covered in thick webbing. The benches face a corridor in the southern wall, which is blocked by iron bars.

WEBS

The webs belong to the phase spider that lurks in this room. The webs act as difficult terrain. A creature that enters the webbed area for the first time on a turn or starts their turn in the area must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained by the webs. A restrained creature can use its action to try to escape, doing so with a successful DC 11 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.

A 10-foot cube of webs has AC 10, 15 hit points, vulnerability to fire, and immunity to bludgeoning, piercing, poison, and psychic damage.

PHASE SPIDER

Easy encounter

A **phase spider** waits in this chamber for living creatures to enter, then attacks. It is in The Ethereal when the characters first enter. It uses its jaunt to move in and out of The Ethereal. If it is reduced to half its hit points or less, it remains on The Ethereal until the creatures leave.

BARs

The bars blocking access to the southern corridor that leads to area 9 can be bent with a successful DC 20 Strength check. The bars have AC 19, 25 hp, and immunity to piercing, poison, and psychic damage.

TREASURE

Stuck in the webbings in the northwestern corner of the room are the remains of a tiefling adventurer who got caught years ago. The adventurer carries a *bag of holding*. There are 500 sp, 70 sp, and a *+1 shield* stuffed in the bag.

8 - SPEARMEN

This chamber is 50-feet wide by 30-feet deep. The floors of this area are decorated with exquisite mosaics depicting soldiers with spears fighting red dragons.

A large, red curtain hangs against the eastern wall. From behind the curtain, you see two silhouettes whispering to each

other.

One of the silhouettes hushes the other, “Shhh, someone’s coming.”

PROGRAMMED ILLUSION

The two silhouettes are nothing more than a *programmed illusion* spell cast on the curtain. Whenever a creature enters the room, one whispers to the other “Shhh, someone’s coming.” Recognizing the illusion as fake requires a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check so long as the observer is within 10 feet of the illusion. Looking behind the curtain reveals that it is a fake, as well.

SPEAR TRAP

The floor is covered in pressure plates. If a creature steps onto any square other than the 10-foot square directly in front of the door in the eastern wall, spears spring out of the floor. A creature in the area must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 9 (2d8) piercing damage from the spears. The spears retract on initiative count 10 (losing initiative) ties, resetting the trap.

Countermeasures. A creature who succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the holes through which the spears spring. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check is needed to discern how the pressure plates work with the spears. A creature with proficiency in thieves’ tools can make a DC 12 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves’ tools to disable a 10-foot by 10-foot section of floor.

Also, a creature can use their action to make a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. On a successful check, the creature sees a path through the spears. On the creature’s next turn, it must make a successful DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to cross the room without triggering the spears. If the creature who recognizes the path moves at half its speed, it makes this check with advantage.

9 - MUSHROOM PATCH

When the characters are within view of area 9, read the following:

The corridor widens into a chamber with 15-foot high ceilings. The floors and walls are covered in large, brown and red mushrooms. Maybe you’re imagining things, but it looks like they’re expanding and contracting—almost as if they had lungs.

DEATHSHROOMS HAZARD

If a creature moves through the deathshroom patch, they must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature contracts deathshroom disease. The disease’s symptoms manifest within 1 hour. Mushrooms start to grow on the surface of the creature’s skin and the creature feels tired and has trouble focusing. After the first hour, the creature suffers one level of exhaustion, and it regains only half the normal number of hit points from

spending Hit Dice and no hit points from finishing a long rest. At the end of each hour, an infected creature must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature gains one level of exhaustion. If the creature dies as a result of exhaustion, it dies and becomes a patch of deathshrooms. Otherwise, the disease lasts until removed by a *lesser restoration* spell or similar magic. A 10-foot by 10-foot cube of deathshrooms has 10 hp and vulnerability to fire damage.

10 - AZER GUARDIAN

A steel statue depicting a dwarf stands on a pedestal set into the alcove of the northern wall. Its head acts as a brazier; wild flame burns from its skull, illuminating the room. It holds a large warhammer in its hands.

There are two tables at the center of this room, both tables surrounded in cushioned benches.

The statue looks like an azer, but it’s a fake.

TABLE MIMICS

Medium encounter

The two tables are both **mimics**. They wait for creatures to inspect the statue, then attack.

11 - FAKE VAULT

The northern door leading into this chamber is locked and trapped.

PETRIFICATION TRAP DOOR

If a creature attempts to open the door, they must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature starts to magically turn to stone and it is restrained. At the end of its next turn, it must repeat its saving throw. On a successful saving throw, the effect ends for it. On a failed saving throw, it turns to stone and is petrified for 1 hour or until a *greater restoration* spell or similar magic is cast upon it.

Countermeasures. Noticing the trap requires a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check. A creature with proficiency in Arcana can disable the check with a successful DC 17 Intelligence check. A dispel magic spell cast against a 5th level spell also removes the trap.

Once the characters get through the trapped door, read the following:

Gold and silver coins litter the floor of this otherwise empty chamber.

SECRET DOOR

There is a secret door in the western wall that leads to area 12. Noticing the wall requires a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check. The secret door opens with a push.

QUICKSAND TRAP

With the exception of a ledge that extends 5-feet around the walls of this chamber, the floor is quicksand. It's disguised with an illusion that makes it look

like the same tile floors found throughout the rest of the dungeon. The treasure is an illusion, too, a duplicate of the pile of treasure found in area 12.

The quicksand is 10 feet deep. When a creature enters the area, it sinks $1d4 + 1$ feet into the quicksand and becomes restrained. Then, at the start of each of the creature's turns, it sinks another $1d4$ feet. As long as the creature isn't completely submerged, it can escape by using its action and succeeding on a Strength check. The DC for the check is 10 plus the number of feet the creature has sunk into the quicksand. A creature that is completely submerged in quicksand can't breathe.

A creature can pull another creature within its reach out of a quicksand pit by using its action and succeeding on a Strength check. The DC is 5 plus the number of feet the target creature has sunk into the quicksand.

Countermeasures. Noticing the quicksand for what it is requires a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. Spotting that the treasure is an illusion without physically interacting with it requires a DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

12 - REAL VAULT

A pile of treasure that looks identical to the treasure in area 11 sits in the center of this room. Unlike the treasure in area 11, however, this treasure is real.

TREASURE

There is 660 gp, 2,200 sp, and 4,520 cp here. Because the illusion in area 11 mirrors the treasure found here, any treasure that is removed from here is also removed from area 11.

13 - SCISSORS

When the characters first enter this room, read the following:

"Alas, Rock," comes a grating, metallic voice. "You have sent your servants to do what you cannot. I shall slice them to bits and send them back in a box. En garde!"

The voice seems to come from a black gem the size of an apple floating at the center of the room. Surrounding the gem are twelve hilt-less blades that appear to act as one. The blades fly toward you!

SCISSORS

Hard encounter

The black gem is a sentient, telepathic, telekinetic construct named Scissors. It has AC 19, 50 hp, immunity to poison and psychic damage, and resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage made from nonmagical attacks. It can't take actions and does not move. Instead, it controls twelve **flying swords** that act as its "hands." If the gem is destroyed, the flying swords cease to function. Inversely, if the flying swords

are destroyed, the gem falls to the floor.

If a living creature touches the black gem, it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. The creature takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one. Once this happens, read the following:

After the black stone saps a portion of your life, it flies from your hand toward the center of the mess of broken blades littering the floor. The blades repair themselves and lift off the ground, surrounding the gem once again.

"Alas, Rock," comes a grating, metallic voice from the gem. "You have sent your servants to do what you cannot. I shall slice them to bits and send them back in a box. En garde!"

Until the gem is destroyed, Scissors and his flying swords reform every time a living creature touches the gem.

14 - OLD BARRACKS

This old room looks like it was once used as a barracks. There are three bunk beds with their heads against the northern wall. Crates and barrels fill the spaces in between.

SLICED-UP SPECTERS

Easy encounter

Two **specters** haunt this room. They look like they were dragonborn in life, except their bodies have been cut into multiple pieces. The pieces float a few inches from where they originally connected. They attack until destroyed, but won't leave the room.

TREASURE

The crates and barrels are full of consumable goods that expired long ago. However, there is a small sack hidden under one of the bunks. It contains 50 gp, a jeweled dagger worth 25 gp, and 2 potions of healing.

15 - WISP WAY

When the characters are within view of this area, read the following:

For 30-feet, the corridor expands into a 20-foot wide room. The room is filled with dust-covered benches facing south toward iron bars that block passage to the south.

This is one of the few areas in this place that isn't dark. Near the 20-foot-high ceilings of the chamber with benches, two lights roughly 10 feet apart illuminate the room.

WISP-O'-WISPS

Medium encounter

The two lights are actually **will-o-wisps**. They attack any

living creature that enters the room.

BARS

The bars blocking access to the southern corridor that leads to the south corridor can be bent with a successful DC 20 Strength check. The bars have AC 19, 25 hp, and immunity to piercing, poison, and psychic damage.

16 - REST ZONE AND PIT

When the characters reach the part of the corridor marked "16a", read:

The corridor expands into a triangular alcove at its southern side. There is a triangular shaped bench at the center surrounding a triangular table upon which a triangular pitcher sits surrounded by three triangular cups. Next to the pitcher, there is a triangular shaped plaque which reads: "You look thirsty. Have a nice, cool drink of water!"

HEALING PITCHER

The pitcher is magical. The water inside is always harmless and refreshing. No matter how much water is poured from it, it never empties. Also, water from the pitcher heals wounds. The pitcher has a pool of healing power that replenishes every day at sunrise. With that pool, it can restore up to 30 hit points at a rate of 5 hit points per drink. Alternatively, the pitcher can expend 5 hit points from its pool of healing to cure a drinker of one disease or neutralize one poison affecting it. The pitcher has no effect on undead or constructs.

If the pitcher is removed from this area, its magic ceases to function.

CONCEALED PIT TRAP

At the location marked "b" on the map, the floor is a trap door which buckles whenever anything weighing 50 pounds or more is placed upon it. If a creature steps onto the trap, it falls 15 feet down into the corridor below, taking 3 (1d6) damage as a result. The gelatinous cube patrols in this area are immune to the damage (they just wobble a little).

Countermeasures. Noticing the concealed pit without watching something or someone else fall into first it requires a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check.

17 - MALFUNCTIONING CEILING

When the characters first enter this room, read or paraphrase the following:

This room is completely empty. The walls are completely smooth save for a few grooves set into the wall. The grooves stretch from the floor to the ceiling. Lining the grooves are gear teeth.

If it isn't immediately obvious, the entire room is a trap. However, it doesn't function as well as it used to.

MALFUNCTIONING CEILING TRAP

When a creature walks into the room, the trap is triggered. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), roll a d6 and reference the Malfunctioning Ceiling Trap table below. A result of "No action" means that nothing happens that turn. The floor

MALFUNCTIONING CEILING TRAP

d10 Result

1-2 No action

3 The doors into this area lock (or unlock).

4-9 The floor lowers 1d6 feet.

10 The ceiling rises 1d6 feet.

When the floor lowers by 10 feet or more, each creature in the area takes 4d6 bludgeoning damage and is restrained. While restrained by the ceiling, a creature takes 2d6 damage at the start of each of its turns.

Countermeasures. At any time, a creature can use its action to make a DC 15 Strength check to stop the ceiling from lowering until the start of the creature's next turn. Also, a creature can stop the ceiling from lowering by using its action to plug something into the gears, such as a spear, dagger, or something else to jam up the gears, and making a successful DC 10 Strength check. On initiative count 20, if the trap has items jammed into its gears, make a DC 10 Strength check on behalf of the trap (it gets a +5 bonus to this roll). On a success, the trap ejects whatever is jamming its gears. Make a Malfunctioning Ceiling Trap as normal. Otherwise, it does nothing. For each successful check made to jam its gears, the DC for its Strength check increases by 3. A creature can also place a pole or some other item between the floor and ceiling to stop the ceiling from lowering.

18 - HOMUNCULI LAB

Tables cluttered with vials, beakers, and other baubles wrap the walls of this chamber except for the northern wall, which is covered by six-foot tall wooden lockers. At the center of the room there is a 10-foot long table with a skeleton strapped down to it.

The entire room gives off a peculiar aroma, not unlike a combination of flowers and excrement.

HIDDEN HOMUNCULI

Easy encounter

Nine out of the ten lockers are home to **homunculi**, four per locker (36 in all). The homunculi were originally the servants of the mage who worked in this laboratory. In the eighty years since their master died, they've lost their sense of purpose and now attack anything that opens their respective lockers.

SECRET DOOR

The fourth locker from the left is locked, its key long gone. A character can break it open by making a successful DC 15

Strength check or pick the lock with a successful DC 13 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools. There is nothing in the locker. Instead, it's a secret passage that opens to area 19.

TREASURE

There are enough supplies in this area to create two sets of alchemists' supplies.

Plus, one of the tables holds a spellbook with the following spells: 1st—*charm person*, *find familiar*, *sleep*, *witchbolt*; 2nd—*detect thoughts*, *gentle repose*; 3rd—*animate dead*.

Additionally, the second, third, and eighth lockers from the left all contain items of value.

- The second locker holds a luxurious robe with a wand of web and the key to the northwestern door in area 19 stuffed into one of its pockets.
- The third locker has a small lockbox. Inside the lockbox is 50 gp and a *ring of swimming*.
- The eighth locker contains 3 *potions of healing* and a *scroll of fireball*.

19 - ACID

The door that leads into this area from the northern corridor is locked from both sides.

Whenever the party first enters this room, read the following:

A horrible smell assaults your senses and stings your eyes. Right away, you recognize it as acid.

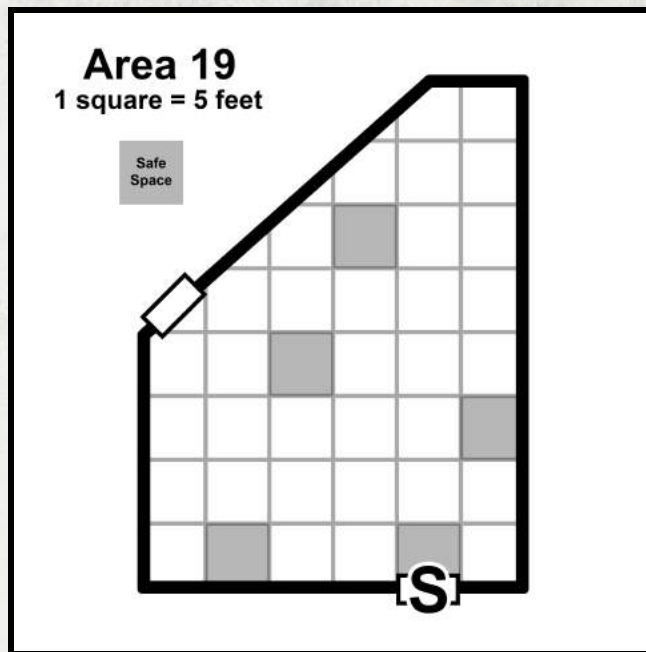
Looking around the room, you notice that the walls and floors are burned from exposure to what you can only guess is acid, their texture white and full of pockmarks. There are a few sections, however, that completely lack any sort of damage; almost as if whatever damaged this room avoided select areas.

ACID NOZZLE TRAP

The entire room is trapped. If a non-undead creature moves 5 feet or more while in the room, the nozzles immediately open up in the ceiling and shower the entire area with acid. The nozzles continue spraying the room until the next initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties) then stop. The resume once more the next time a creature moves 5 or more through the room. Any creature that moves into or starts its turn in the area while the nozzles are spraying takes 11 (2d10) acid damage.

There are certain sections of the room that are protected by invisible, horizontal walls of force which float 6-feet over the floor. The acid hits the invisible platforms and slides off its sides. See the diagram of the Acid Nozzle Trap room on this page for the locations that are protected. While a creature stands under one of the platforms, they are unaffected by the acid.

Countermeasures. The best way to avoid the acid is for a creature to hold a Dash action for when the nozzles shut off and rush for the nearest "safe space." Also, if a creature is able to reach the ceiling, a 10 x 10 section of nozzles can be disabled with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Of course, attempting to disable the trap may leave the creature exposed to the acid shower.



20 - TROPHY ROOM

The door in the north wall is locked on both sides.

Multiple display cases are placed along the walls and center of this small chamber. Each one holds an art object, the majority of which are crafted to look like dragons.

TREASURE

There are 12 dragon-shaped art objects in all. Each one is worth 50 gp.

21 - DRAGON MACHINE

An impressive construct made of polished brass and steel designed to look like a red dragon stands at the southern end of this chamber. Around its neck is a large medallion set with a purple gem the size of your fist.

Naturally, the moment it sees you it springs to life.

DRAGON MACHINE

Hard encounter

The dragon machine attacks any creature that it senses is not a dragon or of dragon descent (such as a half-dragon, dragonborn or sorcerer with the Draconic Bloodline sorcerous origin).

The dragon machine uses the **red dragon wyrmling** stat block except with the changes detailed below, which makes its CR 5 (1,800 XP).

- The dragon machine's type is construct. As a construct, it does not require air, food, drink, or sleep.
- The dragon machine's Intelligence score is 4 (-3) and its Charisma score is 6 (-2).

- The dragon machine has immunity to poison and psychic damage, as well as bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantine weapons.
- The dragon machine is immune to the charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, and poisoned conditions.
- The dragon machine understands Draconic but cannot speak.

TREASURE

The amulet the dragon machine wears around its neck is what its master once used to control it. Although the amulet can't be reconfigured to a new master, it can be sold for 1,000 gp to an arcanist who understands its purpose.

22 - TEMPLE ANTECHAMBER

When the characters first enter this room from the hallway, read:

The cathedral ceilings of this chamber soar 40 feet above you. Expertly crafted frescoes and bas reliefs of dragons assault your vision from all angles. A pair of archways connect this area to a temple beyond, which emits the flickering glow of an unseen fire.

The floor is littered with humanoid skeletons wearing robes. Slowly, they start to rise.

SKELETAL CULTISTS

Medium encounter

There are eight **skeletons** in this area. They are armed only with short swords (no shortbows). They continue attack until destroyed or for as long the characters remain in this area or area 24.

SECRET DOOR

The secret door that leads to area 23 can be found with a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check.

23 - HIGH PRIEST'S CHAMBERS

The secret door opens revealing a small, austere bed chamber. There is a cot against the southern wall, a wardrobe on the western wall, and a desk on the eastern wall. A skeleton wearing gold and silver livery decorated with dragons still sits at the desk. It turns its head and hisses something at you in a foreign language.

The skeleton says in Draconic, "Heathens! Thou shalt worship at the clawed feet of Lord Defroksanz!"

SKELETAL PRIEST

Easy encounter

The skeletal priest uses the **priest** stat block, except with the following changes:

- The skeletal priest's type is undead.
- It has 32 hp (5d8 + 10).
- Its Constitution score is 15 (+2).
- It is immune to poison damage as well as the exhaustion and poisoned conditions.
- The skeletal priest has darkvision out to 60 ft.
- It can speak Draconic (which it uses to cast its spells).

TREASURE

The skeletal priest's livery is worth 100 gp. Its mace is made of gold and iron with jewels set into it. The head of the mace resembles a dragon's head. It's worth 250 gp.

24 - TEMPLE ALTAR

The ceilings are even taller here than they were in the connecting chamber. Most of the room is dominated by a huge dais surrounded by steps. At the center of the dais there is a stone altar carved to look like a dragon on all fours with its wings spread. Multiple melted candles cover the backside of its wings.

Behind the altar are two colossal stone statues of dragons. Their necks are craned upward. Fire emerges from each of their mouths in a great, three-foot spout, illuminating the chamber.

GIANT DRAGONBORN SKELETON

Easy encounter

When the characters step into this chamber, a large skeleton hidden behind the altar lifts itself and stands.

The enormous skeleton stands nearly 10-feet tall. While the majority of its bones appear to be those of a giant, its head is like that of a lizard's. In its bony claws it holds a razor-sharp greataxe easily the size of a full grown human.

The skeletal dragonborn giant uses the **minotaur skeleton** stat block.

TREASURE

Both the dragon-shaped altar and two dragon statues have two bloodstones in each of their eye sockets, six in all. Each bloodstone is worth 50 gp.

25 - OBSERVATION ROOM

The first time the characters enter this room, read the following:

At the north end of the room, three rows of benches face a set of iron bars that blocks the corridor east. At the south end of the room, there are five narrow pedestals. Atop each pedestal is a dragon. Each dragon is a different color: black, blue, green, red, and white. The red dragon faces east while the others face west.

BARS

The bars blocking access to the southern corridor that leads to area 4 can be bent with a successful DC 20 Strength check. The bars have AC 19, 25 hp, and immunity to piercing, poison, and psychic damage.

DRAGON STATUES

Each of the statues can be rotated 360 degrees on its pedestal. If the statue faces east, the nozzles in area 4 deal the type of the damage that the represented dragon is known for dealing (black for acid, blue for lightning, green for poison, red for fire, and white for cold). See area 4 for details. To completely turn off the trap in area 4 without disabling the nozzles, all five statues must face west. Also, the trap stops if the statues are destroyed or a *dispel magic* spell is cast on each statue.

26 – ANTECHAMBER

This chamber boasts plush coaches, tables, and even a small bar set against the base of a tall, dragon-shaped statue at the north end of the room.

All of the liquor bottles at the bar are way past their expiration dates (not that that will stop most characters, mind you). Otherwise, there's nothing of value in this chamber.

27 – PEACEFUL WALK

When the characters first enter this area from the corridor to the east, read:

The 10-foot-wide corridor ends in a huge archway. Beyond the archway is a colossal, triangular room with 35-foot high ceilings. A long, red curtain descends from the ceiling and conceals the northern wall. There is a single door in the chamber set into the southeastern wall. While the door is wooden like the other doors found in the complex, it is carved to resemble flames.

The area is dressed with all sorts of dust-covered furniture, including couches, armchairs, end tables, and low, wide tables nestled between them all.

GRIMLOCK HUNTERS

Easy encounter

Six **grimlocks** from the level below have entered this chamber seeking a way to the surface. Unless the

characters were stealthy, the grimlocks hide among the furniture with hopes of surprising the characters. Reckless and insane, they fight until the death.

FIRE DOOR

The door that leads to area 29 radiates abjuration magic. The door has the normal stats for doors, except it is also immune to fire damage. Whenever the door is subjected to fire damage, the door takes no damage and instead disarms the pendulum trap in area 29 for 1 minute.

SECRET DOOR

There is a door hidden behind the curtain on the northern wall. So long as the characters peek behind the curtain, no check is required to find it.

28 – SECRET CHAMBER

Judging by the dust covering everything here, you'd guess no one living has been inside this small chamber for a few decades. Comfortable furniture crowds the majority of the room, all surrounding a large, short table dressed with a porcelain tea set.

Six skeletons still sit around the couch posed in such a way to give the impression that they're still talking to each other and enjoying the tea. A few even still hold cups with their bony fingers.

At the western end of the seating arrangement, one of the skeletons leans forward in its arm chair reaching out to a gift box placed on the table. Its left hand grasps a golden rod inside the box. The rod looks like it is made out of solid gold. A large, red gem is set into its tip.

A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that each of the skeletons around the furniture all have "shadows" burned into the furniture, walls, and ceilings. The shadows point away from the rod in the gift box.

DISINTEGRATION ROD TRAP

The rod the skeleton is touching is a trap. If a living creature touches the rod, it flashes bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20-feet that lasts for 1 round. Each creature in the area of bright light must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. The creature touching the rod automatically fails its saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature takes 75 (10d6 + 40) force damage. If this damage reduces the creature's hit points to 0, the creature's flesh is stripped from its body. All that remains is a skeleton in the exact same pose that the creature was in before the rod's light flashed. The flash only strips flesh. Objects and creatures who do not have flesh (such as constructs or elementals) are not affected.

Each creature in the area of dim light must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature takes 21 (5d6) radiant damage and is blinded. On a successful saving throw, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't blinded.

Countermeasures. Casting a *detect evil and good* spell reveals it to be a desecrated object. On a casting of *detect magic*, the rod emits an aura of transmutation.

TREASURE

The six skeletons all wear expensive jewelry. There are two bracelets worth 25 gp each, three necklaces worth 50 gp each, and six rings set with precious stones between all of them, each one worth 100 gp.

29 - PENDULUM

When the characters enter this area for the first time, read the following:

This area is 35-feet wide by 20-feet deep. There is a single, wooden door to the northwest and a set of double-doors to the southwest.

Although there is nothing that you can see of value in this room, there is a large lever sticking out of a slot in the southeast wall. It is currently in the up position.

Up or down, the lever does nothing.

PENDULUM TRAP

If the characters open the door that leads to this area from area 27 without first subjecting the door to fire damage (see area 27 for details), the pendulum trap is triggered.

When this occurs, read the following:

Six large, curved blades attached to wooden arms descend from the ceiling. With a whirring sound, the blades start to swing back and forth like pendulums.

Whenever a creature moves through the room, it must make a DC 15 (Acrobatics) check to avoid being hit by one of the pendulums' blades. On a failed check, the creature takes 7 (2d6) slashing damage. And if the check fails by 5 or more, the creature is knocked prone. Also, a creature that ends its turn in the area while the pendulums are swinging must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) slashing damage. The pendulums continue swinging for 1 minute after all living creatures are killed or have left the area.

Locked Doors. So long as the pendulums swing, the door leading to area 30 is locked. The double doors that lead to area 31 are arcane locked (see General Features) regardless of the pendulums' current condition. Skuvan holds the only key to the double-doors that lead to area 31.

Countermeasures. The six pendulums can be attacked. Each has AC 16, 20 hp, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A creature that hits a pendulum with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 3 (1d6) slashing damage. Each time a pendulum is destroyed, the DC for Dexterity checks and saving throws to avoid the pendulums is reduced by 1. A creature who can reach the slot from which each pendulum swings 20-feet on the ceiling can disable a pendulum with a successful DC 13 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools.

30 - PIT TO THE LOW

A chilly draft rises from a large 10-foot square pit at the center of this room. The room's walls, floors, and ceilings lack the same decorations found throughout the rest of the dungeon.

The pit descends 100 feet below to an underground lair filled with gruesome grimlocks and other horrors. The grimlocks in area 27 used this hole to enter the dungeon. The contents of the grimlocks' lair is the subject of another story, perhaps one of your own design.

31 - FURTHER INTO QUABUS

A wide set of stairs descends into darkness. You have a feeling that it leads to even deadlier layers of this death trap dungeon.

The stairs lead to the third level of the dungeon Quabus. There the adventure continues in part 4 of the *Into Quabus* adventure path, *Assault on Quabus*.

32 - ANTECHAMBER

Right away, you can tell that this room was once a dining room. A bevy of chairs surround a long, wooden table. There are service stations cabinets topped with plateware positioned on the eastern and western walls. Two doors lead into and out of the room: one to the north and one directly across it to the south.

Treasure. A quick look inside the service stations reveals ivory stoneware worth 200 gp for the complete set.

33 - KITCHEN

This was once a kitchen. A stone hearth is at the center of the room. Prep tables covered with organized pots, pans, dishes, and serving utensils surround the walls. Crates, barrels, and sacks are stuffed below the tables.

There are two doors out of this kitchen: one of the north and one to the south.

All of the foodstuffs under the tables expired nearly one hundred years ago. All that remains is dust.

RATS

Easy encounter

Two **swarms of rats** are sniffing around the old supplies. If disturbed, they attack.

34 - REPURPOSED BARRACKS

Skuvan tasked a regimen of orcs to wait in this area in case anyone got through his arcane locked doors in area 1.

ORC GUARDS

Hard encounter

There are eight **orcs** in all. One orc stands guard at the eastern door and another stands guard in at the bend in the corridor just before the northern door. Six more orcs are in the barracks. If these orcs detect the presence of an intruder, they join ranks and attack. They prefer to stay within area 34, using the door and beds as cover.

BARRACKS

Once the characters make it past the orcs and enter their barracks, read:

This grungy area is crammed with eight cots and crates stacked almost to the ceiling. Filth and detritus are everywhere and the whole room smells like humanoid body odor.

TREASURE

Each of the orcs carries 2d6 sp. Under one of the beds in the barracks, there is a small pouch stuffed under one of the beds. It contains 50 gp and two carnelians worth 50 gp each.

35 - ANTECHAMBER

This area hosts a couple dust-covered couches divided by a large, short table. Glassware and wine bottles crowd the top of a cabinet against the north wall.

The wine in all the bottles turned to vinegar ages ago.

TREASURE

A quick search through the couches cushions reveals a broach with a dark green alexandrite set into it. It's worth 300 gp.

36 - AUDITORIUM

The southeastern door is locked.

This room is an auditorium. There are five rows of seats all facing the southwestern wall. Oddly, the southwestern wall shimmers like its surface is made of water.

VIEWING WALL

The southwestern wall is a magical projection screen. On a successful DC 11 Wisdom (Perception) check, a character finds a small, rectangular tablet on one of the chairs. The tablet has eleven runes carved into it. The topmost rune is a circle with a line through it. The other ten runes are numbered 0-10, but in the Draconic language.

If a character touches the topmost rune, the shimmering wall glows with dim light 20 feet in all directions. While

the wall is glowing, a character can press up to two numbers on the tablet. Each number combination corresponds with a room in the dungeon (as shown on page 6 of this adventure).

When a room's number is entered, the glowing screen allows anyone standing in this area to observe the respective room and its inhabitants, as per the *scrying* spell.

If a secret area is entered (areas 12, 23, and 28), the words "Not Available" appear on the screen in the Draconic language.

Pressing double "0" displays a map of the entire dungeon, although it still omits the aforementioned secret areas.

37 - BRANDY ROOM

A large, circular red rug is at the center of this chamber. A statue carved into the likeness of a red dragon is tucked into an alcove in the southwestern wall. On the north wall is a brandy station with a decanter and two dozen tumblers. The liquid in the decanter has turned black with age.

PHASE SPIDER

Easy encounter

Unless the characters were stealthy, there is a **phase spider** in this room hiding in The Ethereal beside the dragon statue. It readies an Attack action for the first creature that comes near it.

38 - TELEPORTATION PIT

There is a concealed pit trap just before the intersection in the corridor, marked "38" on the map.

TELEPORTATION PIT TRAP

If 50 pounds of weight or more is placed onto the trapdoor, the door breaks open and drops whatever is in the space into a portal. The portal teleports objects and creatures to the 10-foot square space directly west of the westernmost door in area 5.

Once per every minute, one of the two gelatinous cube patrols falls through this trapdoor and into the portal. See "Cube Patrol" under General Features for details.

Countermeasures. Noticing the concealed pit without watching something or someone else fall into first it requires a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check.

39 - DAIS OF POWER

When the characters first enter this area, read the following:

This cylindrical room exhibits a colossal stone dais which rises towards its center. The ceiling is vaulted and decorated with images of red dragons battling (and defeating) griffon riders.

Standing at the top of the dais is a large armor plated, humanoid machine that stands 10-feet tall. Two three foot long blades extend from its arms.

SKU VAN'S SHIELD GUARDIAN

Deadly encounter

The machine is Shuvan's personal **shield guardian**. Unable to seal the door from area 40 that leads to this area, he tasked his shield guardian to stand guard on the dais and attack any creatures that approached. Shuvan stored a *silence* spell into the shield guardian. The guardian uses it against the first creature that targets it with a spell. It then concentrates its attack against any other spellcasters who are present.

The shield guardian's hands are blades. When it hits a creature with its fist attack, it deals slashing damage instead of bludgeoning damage.

STUCK DOOR

The stone door that leads to area 40 is stuck on the tile in that area, thus, preventing Shuvan from arcane locking it. It's open enough that a Medium or smaller creature can squeeze through without any trouble. The door can be pushed back into place (or opened further) with a successful DC 18 Strength check.

40 - SCRYING TEMPLE

There are two ways to enter this temple. First, there is a set of arcane locked double-doors in the eastern wall. These doors connect to the corridor that connects directly with area 1. Second, there is a door connected to area 39. It's stuck open (see area 39 for details).

No matter how the characters enter this temple, read the following:

The first thing you hear when you walk into this temple is someone chanting in grim, dark language. It sounds like it's coming from the far western end of the room. Foul-smelling smoke pervades the entire chamber, rising all the way to the 80-foot-high ceilings above.

SKU VAN AND HIS MINIONS

Variable difficulty encounter

Skuvan is in the middle of a ritual to resurrect Defroksanz when the characters arrive. He has two layers of defenses.

Thugs. First, at the center of the room, five dragonborn thugs stand guard. They attack as soon as they see the characters. The dragonborn thugs have the following changes to their stat blocks:

- The thugs are resistant to fire damage.
- New Action: Fire Breath (1/Day). The thug exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. A target takes 7 (2d6) fire damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

The thugs' job is to protect the cultists at the western end of the room.

Cultists. Next, Skuvan has his circle of cultists. Once the characters are within view of the dais (the location marked

"c" on the map), read:

Eight figures encircle a set of colossal dragon bones. Each of the figures wears dark red robes with a matching jeweled mask carved to look like a red dragon's skull. All hold their hands over the bones, whispering vile incantations.

Finally, the head of the group, whose robes are trimmed with gold, pulls a dagger from within his robe and slashes his own palm. Drops of blood spill from his hand onto the dragon bones before him.

The masked men repeat the phrase over and over again: "Defroksanz! Defroksanz! Defroksanz!"

The leader of the group is Skuvan (LE male human **cult fanatic**). The other seven are all cultists. With the ritual nearly complete, Skuvan sends the cultists forward to deal with the characters while he finishes the ritual. Skuvan only enters the combat if he is attacked or the other seven cultists are defeated.

When Skuvan enters the fray he attacks with his most powerful spells from afar.

If the characters defeat Skuvan, he uses his last breath to cackle madly, "You fools. Already it is too late. He returns... Defroksanz!"

The dragon bones start to tremble. Then, one by one, they reconnect—first a few ribs joining to create a rib cage. Then the leg bones reattach. Slowly, the large dragon's skeleton starts to rise. Black, ghostly flames burn where its chest should be, slipping up through its fleshless neck and out the holes in its roaring skull.

DEFROKSANZ

Deadly encounter

Defroksanz uses the **young red dragon** stat block. However, at the start of combat he is still reforming. While reforming, he has the changes detailed below, which makes him a CR 6 (2,300 XP) encounter:

- He loses his fly speed.
- He does not yet have his Fire Breath attack.
- Defroksanz starts combat with only 50 hit points. However, he is still regenerating. He regains 20 hit points at the start of his turn if he has at least 1 hit point remaining but less than 100. If he takes radiant damage, he does not regenerate at the start of his next turn.

When Defroksanz's hit points reach 100 or more through regeneration, he is completely reformed and regains his fly speed and fire breath. Defroksanz continues to regenerate until he has regained a total of 120 hit points (or regenerated for 6 rounds).

Once defeated, the dragon utters a final promise:

This is not the last you will see of me. I shall rise... again!

SCRYING POOL

This large pool of water functions similar to the scrying screen in area 36, except it does not have a “remote” to control it. Instead, a viewer need only to speak aloud the name of the room upon which they wish to observe.

TREASURE

There are multiple items of value in this location.

- Each of the cultists' gem-laden masks are worth 100 gp each.
- Skuvan's dagger is a vicious dagger.
- If the characters return Defroksanz's bones to the Pressonian History Museum in Greatwell, the museum's owner, Qiu Xiang pays a 2,500 gp reward. Alternatively, the bones might fetch up to 5,000 gp on the black market as dragon bones are exceedingly rare.

41 - LIBRARY

Tall shelves reach from the floor to the 20-foot high ceilings of this library. Each shelf is jammed with dust-covered tomes. A 10-foot long table sits at the center of the room.

LOCKED DOOR

The door that leads to area 42 is locked.

TREASURE

Many of the books in this library have been out of circulation for years or were outright banned. The complete collection of books in the area are worth 2,500 gp to a buyer who understands their value. The books weigh 5,000 lbs altogether and take up 180 cubic feet of space.

42 - OFFICE

When the characters enter this chamber, read:

A large, wooden desk faces the door through which you just entered this area. Seated at the desk is a skeleton covered in cobwebs, its mouth agape.

SPIDERS, EW!

Easy encounter

A **swarm of spiders** lives in the skeleton's rib cage. They attack any creature that comes near the skeleton or the desk.

TREASURE

The desk has a single drawer that's locked. A DC 13 Strength check or DC 13 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools is all that's needed to open the drawer. Inside, the characters will find a *wand of detect magic* as well as a pearl worth 100 gp (used for *identify* spells).

43 - SITTING ROOM

Tables, chairs, couches, and other comfortable-looking furniture crowd this area. The northernmost wall is curved, making the room a half-circle. It has a wet appearance to it, almost as if it's been sprayed with water.

WHISPER WALL HAZARD

When the characters first enter this area, they can hear strange, inaudible whispers that seem to be coming from the curved, wet wall at the north. Any creature that comes within 5 feet of the wall must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the whispers grow so loud that it's all that they can hear; they become deafened and before they start a long rest, they must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, they cannot perform the long rest and the whispers persist. They can try to take a long rest again in 24 hours, suffering the normal consequences for not taking a long rest in a 24 hour period.

If they pass their Constitution saving throw, they can complete a long rest as normal. At the end of the long rest, the whispers stop.

A creature who succeeds on their initial Wisdom saving throw or the effect ends for it is immune to the Whisper Wall's effects for 24 hours.

A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals the wall for what it is. *Detect evil and good* spells or similar effects also recognize that the wall is desecrated. A *dispel evil and good* spell permanently stops the whisper wall's negative effects.

44 - MASTER'S SITTING ROOM

This chamber looks like another sitting room, albeit a little cozier than some of the others. One large curved couch pressed against the chamber's curved wall draws your attention first. There is a circle shaped like a pie slice in front of the table, creating careful cohesion with the rest of the room's abstract angles.

Facing the unusually-shaped table and couch is a pair of plush red armchairs. A new-looking black and blue striped cloak lies slung over the armchair closest to you. A sparkling, gnarled stick pokes out of the cloak's pocket.

MIMIC CHAIR

Easy encounter

The chair, the cloak, and even the wand are all part of the same **mimic**. It waits for someone to come near and inspect it then attacks.

45 - MASTER'S BEDROOM

This room has two walls connected by a curved wall,

giving the room a quarter-circle shape. With its head at the center of the northernmost wall, a canopy bed with dust-covered red curtains remains. Despite the dust and cobwebs that cover its linens, it looks like it was made just yesterday.

A few feet from the bed, in the northwestern corner, is an armoire crafted to fit perfectly into its spot. Finally, an iron trunk rests against the western wall just by the door through which you entered.

MOLDY CHEST HAZARD

The trunk is locked. It requires a DC 13 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to open the lock or a successful DC 15 Strength check to break it open. Once the trunk opens, read:

The moment you get the trunk open, a cloud of white dust explodes into your face.

The dust is actually mold spores, impossible to detect from outside the trunk. Each creature within 5 feet of the trunk when it opens must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, they become poisoned for 1 hour.

TREASURE

The trunk holds a small pouch with 10 pp and six carnelians worth 50 gp each. There are also 4 potions of healing and a helm of telepathy fashioned to look like a dragon. There was also a spellbook within, but the mold ate through its pages.

The armoire holds four fine silk robes, each one worth 5 gp. One of the robes holds a potion of climbing and 3 pp in one of its pockets.

46 - MASTER'S DINING ROOM

A colossal 30-foot long table beset by two dozen tall, intricately carved wooden chairs on its long sides, with a twenty-fifth chair at its head, commands your attention when you enter this room. A stone dragon statue stands in an alcove at the western wall.

THE MASTER

Hard encounter (avoidable)

When the characters enter this room, the **ghost** of the Master, the dragonborn architect and warden of Violent Delights, appears sitting at the head of the table. The Master says nothing to the characters, only stares at them. He remains non-aggressive unless the characters attack him or do anything chaotic in these chambers. Even if provoked, he vanishes after a few rounds.

47 - THE MASTER'S KITCHEN

It's clear that this area was once a kitchen. And despite the dust that covers everything, all of the utensils here look like they are in excellent shape. In addition to the prep surfaces and cooking areas in this room, the east side of the room is cluttered with tall shelves stuffed with boxes, cans, and barrels, all presumably holding long-expired perishables.

Beyond the cookware (roughly three cooks' utensils kits' worth of goods), there is nothing of value in this area.

WRAP-UP: DEAD BUT NOT GONE

Even if the characters stop Defroksanz, the threat is far from over. Now that Defroksanz's soul has returned to The Real, it actively seeks a new host, even if it isn't within his old bones. Deeper in Quabus he searches, looking for a way to return. And now he has new enemies to add to his list—those pesky adventurers who stopped him.

ADVENTURE HOOK RESOLUTIONS

The adventure hooks presented earlier can be resolved as follows:

INTO QUABUS

The characters will find even more areas to explore once they discover the staircase in area 31 that leads down to Quabus' deeper levels. The adventure continues in Assault on Quabus.

MAPS OF QUABUS

A detailed map of Quabus' Violent Delights (at least 20 areas) will earn the characters 2,000 gp from the noble, Kheshud Bosteid. If the characters discover the staircase in area 31 that leads to the next level and inform Bosteid, Bosteid offers another 3,000 gp if they will explore that level, too.

DEFROKSANZ'S BONES

As promised, the Pressonian History Museum's owner, Qiu Xiang, awards the characters 2,500 gp for the return of Defroksanz's bones. Plus, he offers another an additional 10% over the normal asking price for every artifact related to the lair itself (such as the Master's robes, stoneware, the cultist's masks, etc.). If the characters share details regarding Defroksanz's return, he takes interest in the matter. He then asks if they will descend further into Quabus to learn more about the ritual and how they were able to bring back Defroksanz's soul without a phylactery present.

OPEN GAMING LICENSE

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other forms in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphics, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.
2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.
3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.
4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.
5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License
6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.
7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title, and interest in and to that Product Identity.
8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.
9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.
10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.
11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.
12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.
13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.
14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.
15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc. System Reference Document 5.0 Copyright 2016, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford, Chris Perkins, Rodney Thompson, Peter Lee, James Wyatt, Robert J. Schwalb, Bruce R. Cordell, Chris Sims, and Steve Townshend, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

END OF LICENSE



 **DMDAVE**

ASSAULT ON QUABUS

FIFTH EDITION COMPATIBLE

The red dragon Defroksanz's phylactery is hidden somewhere on the third level of Quabus, the dragon dungeon.
Featuring art by Tim Hartin and Paper Forge.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Adventure Primer	3
Background	3
Research Level	4
Arrival	4
General Features	4
Keyed Locations	5
Map of Dungeon Quabus Level 3 by Tim Hartin	6
Wrap-Up: The Necrostone	14
Open Gaming License	15



INTO QUABUS

This adventure is the second part of four in the *Into Quabus* adventure path which takes characters from 3rd level to 6th level.

Part 1. Danger at Blire Manor. A gang of mercenaries draws attention to itself when it starts operating out of Old Blire Manor.

Part 2. Prisoners of Quabus. In the old dragon dungeon Quabus, villains take part in the sale of humans for food.

Part 3. Secrets of the Dungeon Quabus. Deeper into the old dragon dungeon Quabus, a great evil stirs.

Part 4. Assault on Dungeon Quabus. A war is brewing in the dragon dungeon Quabus.

CREDITS

This adventure was a collaborative effort brought to you by these awesome folks:

Producers: The DMDave Team

Story and Mechanics: [DMDave](#)

Proofing: Benjamin "Sarge" Gilyot

Cover Illustrator: Shutterstock

Cartography: [Tim Hartin](#)

Interior Illustrations: [Paper Forge](#) and Shutterstock

Additional Support: The DMDave Team

Special Thanks: A big thanks to our friends at *Wizards of the Coast* for making the coolest game in the world and allowing creators like ourselves to borrow your open license.

HOW TO RUN THIS ADVENTURE

To properly run this adventure, you need the Fifth Edition core rulebooks.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their character first arrive at a location or under a specific circumstance, as described in the text.

The core 5e monster book contains stat blocks for most of the creatures found in this adventure. When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block in the core monster book. If the monster is not included in the core monster book, text in parenthesis point to the monster's source.

Spells and equipment mentioned in the adventure are described in the core player's rulebook. Magic items are described in the core GM's guide.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used throughout this adventure:

hp	hit points	LG	Lawful good
AC	Armor Class	CG	Chaotic good
DC	Difficulty Class	NG	Neutral good
XP	experience points	LN	Lawful neutral
pp	platinum piece(s)	N	Neutral
gp	gold piece(s)	CN	Chaotic neutral
ep	electrum piece(s)	LE	Lawful evil
sp	silver piece(s)	NE	Chaotic evil
cp	copper piece(s)	NE	Neutral evil
NPC		nonplayer character	



ADVENTURE PRIMER

Assault on Quabus is a Fifth Edition adventure for **three to seven 5th- to 7th-level characters**. The adventure is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 5**. Characters who completely clear the level should reach 6th level by its conclusion (if not 7th). The adventure takes place in the campaign

world of Omeria in The Summer Land region. This adventure is the fourth part of the Into Quabus series and a direct follow-up to Secrets of Quabus. However, you can easily make this a solitary level for your 5th-level characters to visit.

BACKGROUND

The ancient red dragon Tostrasz the Enormous' youngest wyrm, Defroksanz, was gifted the dungeon Quabus on his 100th hatching day. For Great Chromatics, a dungeon is a rite of passage. And Defroksanz made sure to make Quabus one of the most formidable dungeons in all of Omeria.

The first level of Quabus was its prison. Defroksanz's minions would capture commoners across The Summer Land and inter them there. Next, came the death trap second level, Violent Delights. Defroksanz and his associates would watch their prisoners try to escape the deadly obstacle course, watching them on viewing screens. Finally, the third level acted as Defroksanz's research and development center. There, the dragon expended its sorcerous energies to unlock the mysteries of the Cosmos.

Following Defroksanz's defeat during the War of the Burning Plains, Quabus sat unmanaged for decades. The dungeon was rediscovered by one of Defroksanz's descendants, Skuvan the Firesoul. Skuvan cleared a path to the old scrying temple on Violent Delights. However, neither he nor any of his minions dared go below the second layer.

The research labs are overrun with all sorts of dangers. Within its dark halls live bizarre aberrations, berserk constructs, conjured fiends, and creatures from The Low who've staked a claim in Quabus.

Of course, the real danger of this layer of Quabus is the rumored presence of Defroksanz's phylactery, a large diamond named The Necrostone. The spirit of the dungeon's former owner now searches the ruins of his old laboratories for a way to return to life through lichdom. If successful, Defroksanz will certainly bring doom on The Summer Land and potentially all of Omeria.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The following plot hooks present some ways in which the characters can get involved in this adventure.

INTO QUABUS

If the characters already made it through the first three parts of the Into Quabus series, then this is the fourth and final part (of this cycle). The entrance to the third level is located in area 31 of Violent Delights.

A VISION OF DOOM

One of the characters experiences a dream. In the dream, a two-headed mantis warns the character that the dragon, Defroksanz, will soon revive itself. If this happens, it could spell doom for all of northern Omeria. The two-headed mantis gives the character directions to find the dragon's old dungeon Quabus.

MAPS OF QUABUS

A scholar, Keshud Bosteid wants a detailed map of the third level of the dragon dungeon Quabus. He offers a 3,000 gp reward to anyone that can fulfill this request. If the characters haven't worked with Bosteid before, he explains that the dungeon can be found below the ruins of Old Blire Manor.

BRING BACK THE NECROSTONE

The historian and artifact collector, Qiu Xiang (LE male dragonborn knight) seeks a powerful artifact called The Necrostone. He believes it can be found on the third level of the dungeon Quabus located below Old Blire Manor. He's willing to pay up to 5,000 gp if the characters retrieve the stone and bring it to him.



RESEARCH LEVEL

Beyond the prison and Violent Delights lie Defroksanz's laboratories and research rooms. The Great Chromatics, unhindered by the arcane laws of The Summer Land, applied the dark arts of conjuration, transmutation, and black necromancy to create new, fantastic horrors with which they could torment humanoidkind.

The research level was managed by an Aspaethan Transmuter named Dambudzo. Dambudzo was obsessed with Loikiel, the Archtransmuter Conquerer who nearly destroyed all of Omeria in the 7th century. Having fled her homeland after being chased away by the witchhunters, she was kidnapped by Defroksanz and his minions. Proving her worth, she convinced the dragon to give her a position as a researcher. After a year of impressive service, Defroksanz promoted Dambudzo to the director of arcane research and expanded Quabus so she could expand her studies.

When Quabus fell into disarray following the death of Defroksanz, Dambudzo sealed herself in her chambers and drank a potion of her own design to turn her into an immortal creature. The potion gave her eternal life, but it also changed her into a frightful monster. Plus, the transformation drove her insane. Years later, she continues to thrive in the dark, developing aberrations worthy of Loikiel himself. She employs a host of grimlocks who worship her like a god.

ARRIVAL

If the characters played through the first two chapters of Into Quabus, likely they discovered the staircase that leads down to the research level via area 31 in Violent Delights. However, if this is the characters' first experience with the Into Quabus adventure path, you can have them circumvent the first two layers and explain that the stairs below Old Blire Manor lead directly into the research level.

GENERAL FEATURES

Unless stated otherwise, the research level of Quabus has the

following features.

CEILINGS, WALLS, AND FLOORS

Quabus' chambers were hewn from the stone and loose earth below the region where Old Blire Manor now stands. The walls, floors, and ceilings were then dressed with limestone bricks. The ceilings are 10 feet high in passages and 15 feet high in chambers and braced with timbers. Doorways are 7-feet high and 4-feet wide to allow for the dungeon's larger patrons to pass through unhindered. Thanks to frequent earthquakes in the region, cracks in the ceilings, floors, and walls are common.

DOORS

All of the dungeon's doors are made from solid oak and hung on iron hinges (AC 15, 25 hp, immunity to poison and psychic damage). At the center of each door is a small window that allows creatures to view whatever is on the other side of the door. Most of the doors can be locked. A locked door can be broken open by a character who uses their action to make a successful DC 17 Strength check. Or a character can use his or her action to make a DC 15 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools to pick the lock.

ENCHANTMENTS

Like many of the Great Chromatic's secret lairs, all of the dungeon's manmade chambers and passageways are protected from magic that would allow intruders to enter. Any spell that would allow a creature to enter or leave the dungeon or transport itself from one level to another such as *astral projection*, *plane shift*, *teleport*, or *word of recall* fail. Similarly, effects that banish creatures to another plane of existence do not work. These restrictions apply to magic items and artifacts as well. However, spells that allow movement between The Ethereal such as the *etherealness* spell still work. Conjuration spells and other magical effects that summon creatures into the dungeon still function, as does magic that utilizes extradimensional space such as

magnificent mansion or *bags of holding*. However, spells cast within those spaces are subjected to the same restrictions as the rest of the dungeon. Finally, the dungeon, its contents, and any creature currently inside the dungeon cannot be detected by divination spells or magical effects used outside the dungeon. Spells such as *locate object* or *screaming* simply fail. The same goes for magic items that duplicate those effects or innate tracking features such as an invisible stalker's Faultless Tracker feature. However, all of these effects work so long as both the caster/user and target are inside the dungeon.

LIGHTS

The research level has torches hung throughout, but very few are lit. The boxed text descriptions assume that the characters have darkvision or their own sources of light.

SOUNDS AND SMELLS

Random sounds and peculiar smells are common occurrences on this level of Quabus. Screeches from strange things hiding in the dark might happen at any time, regardless of the presence of a creature. Smells range from sweet and enticing to horrible and vomit-inducing.

TRANSMUTATION ENERGY

Like wild yeast, rogue transmutation energy permeates this level of Quabus. Each character must succeed on a Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour they spend on this level or gain one level of exhaustion. The DC is 5 for the first hour and increases by 1 for each additional hour—this includes resting. If the characters use magical protection while resting, such as that offered by the *tiny hut* or *magnificent mansion* spells, they do not have to make the saving throw. Resting in this way or leaving the level for at least 1 hour or more resets the DC to 5.

If a character reaches 6 levels of exhaustion, it dies and instantly transforms into a gibbering moulder. The transformation of the body can be undone only by a *wish* spell.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The third level is filled with all sorts of horrors lurking in the dark waiting for unsuspecting creatures to stumble into their paths.

Every 10 minutes that the characters spend roaming through this layer, roll a d20. On a result of 19-20, a random encounter happens. Choose a random encounter or roll randomly using the Research Level Random Encounter table below to determine the nature of the encounter.

KEYED LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to the map of the Research Level of Quabus as shown on page [x].

1 - ENTRY HALL

When the characters first enter this area from the staircase leading back to the second level, read or paraphrase the following:

RESEARCH LEVEL RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d6 Encounter

1	1d8 death dogs
2	2d6 giant rats
3	1d6 + 1 giant spiders
4	1d4 gibbering moulder s
5	2d6 grimlocks
6	1 ochre jelly

The stairs deposit you into a colossal, diamond-shaped room measuring 60-feet on each of its sides. Four columns hold the 80-foot high ceilings aloft. At the center of each wall, four passages break away from the room, each one headed toward one of the cardinal directions. At the diamond's three corners that don't bear the staircase upon which you just descended stand four tall statues. The southernmost statue is carved to look like a red dragon, its fangs bared. The westernmost statue looks like a beautiful woman wearing long, flowing robes, her arms cross in front of her chest. And the easternmost statue looks like a dragonborn man reading from a scroll.

The three statues depict Defroksanz (south), Dambudzo (west), and The Master (east).

BLACK PUDDING

A single **black pudding** hides behind the statue of the man reading from the open scroll. When a character comes within 5 feet of the statue, the ooze attacks.

DAMBUDZO'S SECRET

If a character searches the statue of Dambudzo and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check, they discover a hidden compartment in the pedestal upon which she stands. The compartment contains a key that opens the secret trapdoors in areas 13 and 14.

2 - STUDENT BARRACKS

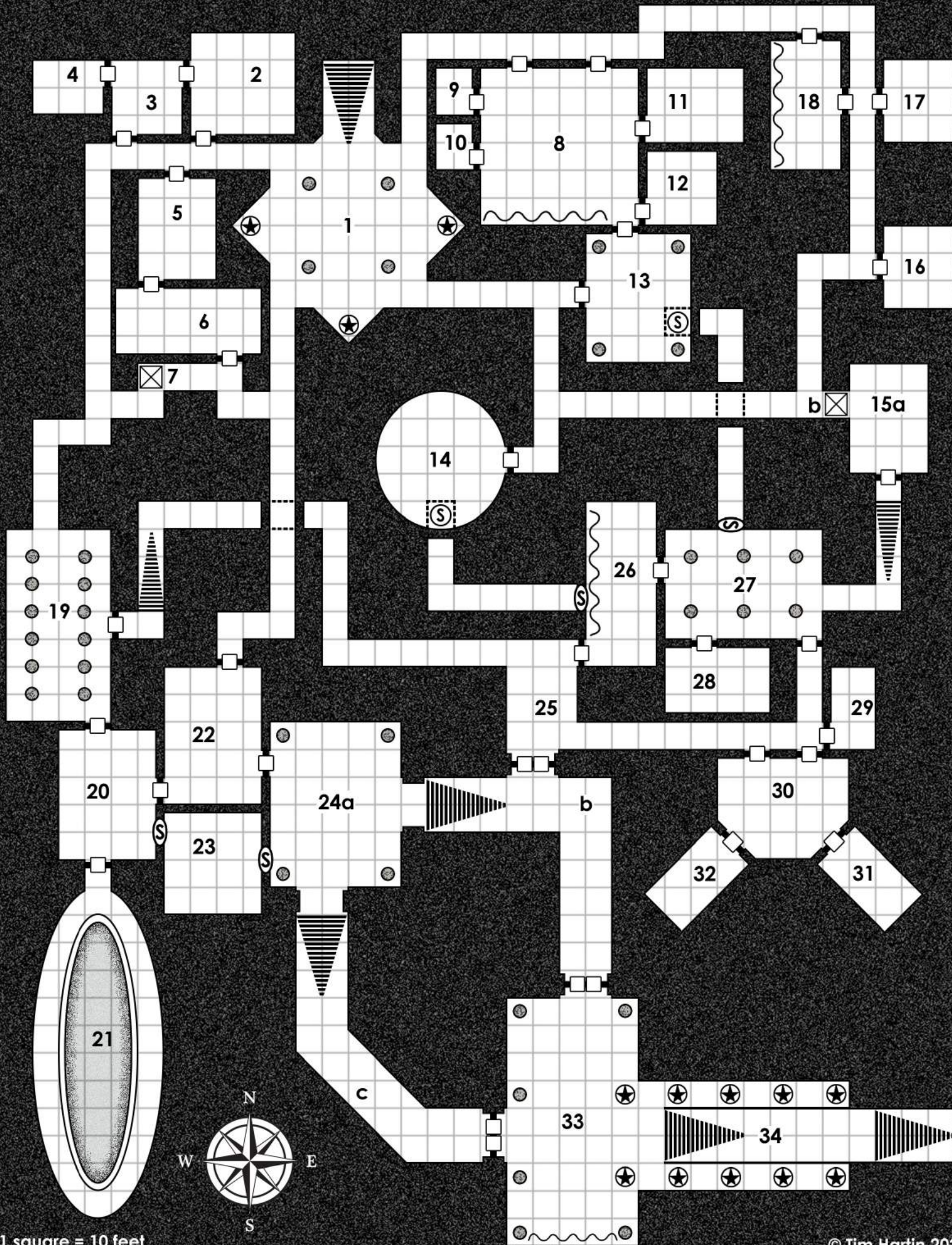
This large square room is 40-feet on a side with two doors to the west and south. There are 14 beds in the room, each with a locker at its foot.

MUTATED STUDENTS

The moment the characters enter the room, they are subjected to the babbling of three **gibbering moulder**s. All three of the aberrations were once students of Dambudzo until the rogue transmutation energy in the complex forever altered them. Insane, they attack any living creature they find.

TREASURE

The 14 footlockers all contain extra robes and commoner's clothes. There are also 6 spell scrolls spread randomly



throughout the lockers. The scrolls have the following spells: *darkvision*, *expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *fly*, *longstrider*, and *rope trick*.

3 - STUDENT COMMONS

There are two dust-covered stone tables in this room both flanked by benches.

This was where the students gathered. There's nothing of value here.

4 - KITCHEN

This looks like it was once a kitchen. There's a hearth in the northwestern corner, counters for food preparation, and shelves cluttered with pots, pans, and other cooking implements.

ENCOUNTER: MUTATED STUDENT

A small, nobby creature covered in open sores digs through the remains of this area searching for food. It finally discovers a rat and gnaws off its head. The creature was once a student, but was changed by the errant magic that pervades this level. Treat the mutated student as a **quasit**, but with the following changes:

- Its creature type is aberration.
- It understands Common, but otherwise can't speak.
- It can't change shape or turn invisible.

The student isn't interested in fighting or interacting with the characters. It tries to hide or flee.

5 - MEDITATION CHAMBER

This large room measures 30 feet wide and 40 feet long.

Six motionless, mummified corpses sit cross-legged on moldy cushions throughout the room. They all face a mural on the eastern wall. The mural depicts a bald man in red robes with alabaster white skin and red eyes. He is surrounded by three-eyed toad creatures.

The corpses are harmless.

A successful DC 13 Intelligence (History) check reveals that the mural depicts Loikiel the Archtransmuter, a villainous mage who vanished from the face of Casar over 300 years ago. The toad creatures are his servants, the *bufonem*.

6 - ROOM OF STONES

This long hall features eight pedestals placed against the walls. Atop each pedestal there is a different stone, each one a

different color.

ENCOUNTER: FAKE PEDESTALS

A *detect magic* spell reveals transmutation magic on the pedestals. All eight pedestals that hold the gems are **mimics** held in magical stasis. If a stone is touched or tampered with, the mimic upon which the stone sits springs to life and attacks.

DRAGON KEY

Hanging on the far eastern wall is a stone key shaped like a dragon. This key disables the dragon's head trap in area 17.

TREASURE

The eight stones are the Jaduee-Patr, the elements of creation (see the Appendix). All of the stones lack their energy and no longer function. Still, even in their dormant state, they are worth 100 gp each.

7 - DRAGON'S HEAD

When the characters approach this area from the west, read or paraphrase the following:

The corridor continues east, and then turns south. At the wall just before the turn, there is a large dragon's head carved into the western wall. Its mouth is open. There appears to be a keyhole set into its mouth.

TRAP: CONCEALED PIT

This 10-foot-by-10 foot section of hall is trapped with a concealed pit with a trap door. When a creature steps onto the trapdoor, the entire floor buckles and drops the creature 10 feet down into a pit. The creature takes 3 (1d6) damage from the fall. Then, a 10-foot-cubed stone block slides from the wall directly west of the trap door and covers the pit. This has two effects. First, the creature inside of the pit cannot escape the pit until the block is removed. Second, the block prevents further passage through the hallway.

Countermeasures. The only way to move the stone block is to insert the dragon key from area 6 into the stone dragon's mouth. If the characters don't have or lost the stone key, a character proficient in thieves' tools can make a successful DC 15 Dexterity check to disable the device. Once unlocked or disabled, the block slides back into its original position. After 1 hour, the trap resets.

8 - AUDITORIUM

This large, well-lit chamber was once an auditorium. Six rows of six dust-covered school desks face the southern wall where a large, red curtain hangs from the 40-foot-high ceiling. A few feet in front of the curtains there is a large, wooden desk that faces the chairs.

There are seven exits in this area: two in the northern wall,

one in the southern wall, two in the eastern wall, and two in the western wall.

ENCOUNTER: INSTRUCTOR GALABOS

Once a teacher working for Dambudzo, Galabos was warped by the magic of this level. He now stands 16 feet tall and his face is a bulbous mess of oozing sores. The bodies of four of his old students have merged into his own; their faces and features are visible on his chest, back and shoulders. They moan incoherently.

Treat Galabos as a **hill giant**, except his type is aberration instead of giant. Instead of a great club, he uses his old desk as a weapon and throws the school desks as rocks (effectively the same). He also has the following feature:

Eject Student. When first encountered, Galabos' body contains 4 of his students. As a bonus action, Galabos releases one of the students which appears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of him and acts immediately after him in initiative order. Treat the student as a **zombie**. The student acts as an ally of Galabos but isn't under his control.

9 - STUDY ROOM

This small room has a wooden table at its center. A withered skeleton sits at the south end of the table.

The corpse is harmless.

TREASURE

The corpse is carrying a *wand of secrets* in its robes.

10 - STUDY ROOM

The small room has a wooden table at its center. There are two dried-out corpses wearing red robes seated at the table.

ENCOUNTER: UNDEAD STUDENTS

Both of the corpses come to life whenever a living creature enters the room. Treat them both as **mummies**.

11 - LABORATORY

This room looks like it was once a laboratory. The walls are wrapped with tables, each one covered in old alchemical equipment. There is an acrid smell coming from the easternmost table.

HAZARD: CAUSTIC SUBSTANCE

A beaker of foul-smelling liquid spilled onto the northernmost table's surface, creating a puddle of brown liquid. Four potions sit in the liquid: *potion of growth*, *potion of hill giant strength*, *potion of fire breath*, and *potion of climbing*.

If a character touches one of the potions with his or her bare hands, they take 1d6 acid damage. Furthermore, if the potion is placed into a nonmagical container such as a leather, cloth, or canvas pouch, pocket, or bag, the substance on the outside of the container eats through the material and burns a hole in the container, likely ruining it. The potion then falls out of the container, potentially shattering on the floor.

Countermeasures. Pouring wine or anything else with high alcohol content neutralizes the acidic liquid, making the potions safe to pick up. A character with proficiency in alchemist's tools will automatically recognize this fact. Otherwise, a character must make a successful DC 10 Intelligence check to know this.

12 - INSTRUCTOR GALABOS' OFFICE

This room looks like an office. There is a large desk at the north end of the room facing south with a bookshelf right behind it. In front of the desk are three chairs. A rotting couch rests against the southern wall.

TREASURE

A quick search through Galabos' desk reveals his old spellbook. The spellbook contains all the spells a **mage** prepares.

13 - INSTRUCTORS LOUNGE

This chamber boasts 30-foot high ceilings held aloft by four round columns. There are rotting couches and chairs spread throughout the area.

A large cabinet rests against the western wall, its doors open.

ENCOUNTER: RATS OF UNUSUAL SIZE

Four bigger-than-normal **giant rats** are hiding among the furniture in this room. Make the following changes:

- The giant rats' sizes are Medium.
- They have 18 (4d8) hit points each.
- They have Strength scores of 12 (+1).
- The giant rats deal 1d6 + 2 piercing damage with their bite attack.

They are aggressive and attack the characters on sight.

SECRET TRAPDOOR

The cabinet against the western wall is empty and it's attached to the floor. There is a false bottom built into the cabinet that acts as a trapdoor. The trapdoor is locked; one of the wooden slats slides away revealing the keyhole. The key found in the statue of Dambudzo in area 1 unlocks the trapdoor. Without the key, a character with proficiency in thieves' tools can pick the lock with a successful DC 13 Dexterity check. A character with a crowbar or similar lever can break open the trap door with a successful DC 15 Strength check. The trapdoor hides a ladder that leads into an old, web-covered corridor that leads to area 27.

The trapdoor can be opened from its underside without a key.

ENCOUNTER: WEBS AND SPIDERS

The secret corridor connecting this area and area 27 has a 20-foot long by 10-foot wide area of thick webs near its center. A creature entering the webbed area for the first time on a turn or starting its turn there must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained by the webs. A restrained creature can use its action to try to escape, doing so with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.

Each 10-foot cube of giant webs has AC 10, 15 hit points, vulnerability to fire, and immunity to bludgeoning, piercing, and psychic damage.

There are four **giant wolf spiders** who hide in the corridor, just beyond the webs. They wait for creatures to get stuck in their webs then attack.

14 - SUMMONING ROOM

This rotunda is 60-feet in diameter with 90-foot high ceilings. The floor is decorated with arcane symbols.

There is a large, glowing white orb floating 10 feet off the ground at the center of the room.

This room emits strong abjuration magic, detectable by a *detect magic* spell. Similarly, casting *detect evil and good* reveals a strong presence of fiendish evil that comes from the floating orb.

ENCOUNTER: THE ORB

The orb houses a **barbed devil's** mind. A humanoid that touches the orb must make a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or become possessed by the barbed devil that is imprisoned in the orb. The target is incapacitated and loses control of its body. The barbed devil now controls the body and the target's mind is placed into the orb. The barbed devil can't be targeted by any attack, spell, or other effect, except ones that affect fiends, and it retains its alignment, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. It otherwise uses the possessed target's statistics, but doesn't gain access to the target's knowledge, class features, or proficiencies.

The possession lasts until the body drops to 0 hit points, the barbed devil ends it as a bonus action, or the barbed devil is turned or forced out by an effect like the *dispel evil and good* spell.

When the possession ends, the barbed devil returns to the orb so long as the orb is on the same plane of existence, and the target's mind returns to its body. If the orb has been destroyed or is on another plane of existence, both the barbed devil and the host's mind are destroyed; the host's mind can only be returned with a *wish* spell when this happens.

The target is immune to the barbed devil's possession for 24 hours after succeeding on the saving throw or after the possession ends.



The orb can be destroyed. It has AC 15, 10 hp, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

If the orb is destroyed, any creature whose mind is currently housed within it is destroyed as well.

SECRET TRAPDOOR

If a character succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check, they discover a small keyhole set into the floor's tiles. Placing the key found on Dambudzo's statue in area 1 into the keyhole unlocks a secret trapdoor and ladder. The ladder leads down into a secret corridor that connects to area 26.

The trapdoor can be opened from its underside without a key.

15 - ANTECHAMBER

This level of the dungeon is divided into two distinct sections. The uppermost section of the level was intended for students and Dambudzo's disciples. The lower section was where Dambudzo and her colleagues actually worked. This antechamber guards the direct passage to the lower levels.

15A - LOUNGE

Judging by the cobweb-covered couches and chairs that clutter this room, this was probably once a lounge.

Trapped Door. The southern door that leads to area 27 is magically trapped. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the presence of a subtle arcane glyph. If a Medium or smaller creature tries to pass through the door without speaking the phrase "Loikiel" first the target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the target's size is reduced to 1/10th its normal height and 1/1000th its normal weight. This reduction decreases its size to Tiny. Until the effect ends, the target's Strength score is 2 unless it is already lower and its movement speed is reduced to 5 feet unless it is already less. The target's weapons also shrink to match its new size. While these weapons are reduced, the target's attacks with them deal only 1 point of damage and do not add nor subtract the target's Strength modifier.

The effect lasts until the target completes a long rest or until a *greater restoration* spell or similar magic is cast on the target.

The glyph can be removed with a *dispel magic* spell. Alternatively, it can be removed with a successful DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check. Failing the check by 5 or more

triggers the trap, targeting the character attempting to disarm it.

The trap only works from this side (see area 27 for details).

15B - PIT TRAP

The 10-foot-by-10 foot section of hall marked “b” on the map is trapped with a concealed pit with a trapdoor that swivels open to deposit victims, then closes, sealing them inside the pit. When a creature sets foot on one side of the pit or the other, they fall 10 feet into the pit and take 3 (1d6) damage from the fall. The trap’s door then swivels to the opposite position, closes, and locks with its bottom side facing up.

Noticing the pit’s trapdoor requires a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Spikes. The cover’s bottom side is covered in 1-inch tall, poison spikes. While the trap door is closed with its bottom side exposed, any creature who enters or starts their turn in the area takes 2d4 piercing damage for each square that they move through and must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature is poisoned. The poisoned effect lasts until the creature completes a long rest.

Locked. Once the trap door is in place with its bottom side up, it is locked. A character proficient in thieves’ tools can make a successful DC 13 Dexterity check to jimmy the lock. Or a character with a crowbar or similar lever can pry open the door with a successful DC 15 Strength check. Failing either check by 5 or more subjects the character to the spikes detailed above.

Ooze Companion. Unfortunately, the trap is the least of the victim’s worries. There is a **gray ooze** at the bottom of the pit. Its False Appearance trait allows it to blend in with the walls of the pit, making it undetectable. It immediately attacks any living creature that falls into the pit.

ENCOUNTER: AIR ELEMENTAL GUARDIAN

When either of the traps protecting the ante-chamber are triggered, an **air elemental** is conjured into the center of area 15a. The air elemental attacks all intruders. If the phrase “Loikiel” is spoken aloud, the air elemental vanishes and returns to the plane from whence it came.

16 - GUEST ROOM

This chamber boasts a four-post bed, dresser, desk, and tall, oak wardrobe.

Other than a few moldy robes in the wardrobe, there is nothing of value in this chamber.

17 - GUEST ROOM

This old bedroom is covered in cobwebs.

There is a large bed against the north wall, a wardrobe to the south, and a desk to the east.

It appears that there is something still using the bed; there is a bulge under the sheets roughly in the shape of a six-foot-

tall humanoid.

There is a withered corpse under the sheets, dead for more than fifty years. It’s harmless.

TREASURE

The corpse wears a golden signet ring worth 250 gp.

18 - GUEST PRESENTER’S HALL

Two rows of school desks face the western wall which is dressed with a large, red curtain. There is a podium facing the chairs.

This room has 30-foot high ceilings.

ENCOUNTER: BAT CREATURES

Three of this level’s old students were transformed by the errant transmutation magic into grotesque bat-like creatures. All six bat creatures use the **giant bat** stat block, except with the following changes, which makes them each CR 2 (450 XP):

- A bat creature’s type is monstrosity and its alignment is chaotic evil.
- It has an Intelligence score of 12 (+1).
- **Spellcasting.** The bat creature is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Intelligence is its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). It requires no somatic or material components to cast its spells. It has the following wizard spells prepared: Cantrip (at will)—*fire bolt*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*; 1st level (4 slots)—*magic missile*, *shield*; 2nd level (2 slots); *flaming sphere*, *darkness*

The bat creatures remain hidden until they are detected. At the start of combat, one of the bats casts *darkness* while the others attack with their ranged spells.

TREASURE

The bats keep a sack of treasure that they’ve collected from other parts of the dungeon. The sack contains a spellbook with all the spells that the bat creatures prepared, 180 cp, 250 sp, and 90 gp.

19 - HALL OF PILLARS

The eastern door that leads to the corridor that connects this area and area 25 is locked. The key is kept in Soselva’s cocoon (see below).

Two rows with six pillars each hold up the 40-foot high ceilings of this large room. Both the pillars and walls’ bas-reliefs are carved to look like great dragons.

A character who glances up at the ceiling notices that the ceiling is covered in thick webs.

ENCOUNTER: SOSELVA AND HER SPIDERS

Soselva was another of Dambudzo’s colleagues who was irrevocably changed by this level’s magic. It turned Soselva into a spider-humanoid hybrid. She uses the **dridrider** stat block

except she speaks Common instead of Elvish and Undercommon, and she can cast all the spells that a **mage** can cast. When the characters first enter this chamber, she is hiding in the cobwebs on the ceiling with four **giant wolf spiders**. At the start of combat, she casts *darkness* on the characters, then sends the spiders into the dark who use the pillars to make hit and run attacks. Once the spiders are defeated, she enters the fray using her full array of spell attacks. If she is defeated before the spiders, the spiders retreat to the dark recesses of this chamber.

TREASURE

Soselva keeps a cocoon with her treasures stuck to the ceiling. If a character reaches the cocoon, they will find 200 gp and a jeweled platinum scepter worth 500 gp. There is also a key that unlocks the door to the east.

20 - GYMNASIUM

This large area is filled with unusual looking implements and furniture. At one corner of the room, you see racks of heavy stones of various sizes, some of which have iron handles. Another section has odd-looking equipment for climbing on such as pairs of parallel bars, a six-foot high sawhorse with hand grips. There's also thick, knotted ropes that hang from the ceiling.

The floor is covered in thick, plush rugs.

This used to be this level's gymnasium. Most of the equipment is rusted or rotting.

SECRET DOOR

There is a secret door hidden in the southwestern wall that leads to area 23. Finding the door requires a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check.

21 - POOL

This oval-shaped room is dominated by a colossal oval-shaped pool at its center. The pool is 100-feet long and 30-feet wide and its widest point. The water inside looks murky and non-potable.

The pool is 10-feet deep at its deepest point.

ENCOUNTER: MUTATED STUDENTS

There are seven mutated students hiding in the water. The students were changed into amphibious creatures by the level's radiant magic. Use the **sahuagin** stat block for each one, except that they speak Common instead of Sahuagin and they do not wield spears.

The students wait for creatures to lurk by the side of the pool, hiding in the dark, stagnant water. They then attack with intent to grapple and drag their victims into the water. Failing that, they lash out with claws and teeth.

TREASURE

The students keep the valuables they've taken from creatures who've entered this area at the bottom of the pool in an old recreational net. Inside the net are *goggles of night* and three *potions of healing*.

22 - LOCKERS

The door leading to and from area 24 is locked. The key that unlocked the door is long lost.

This large room appears to be a room for disrobing. The walls are wrapped in shelves for storing belongings, and there are two freestanding rows of shelves that stand north-to-south at the center of the room. Between the rows of shelves are stone benches.

This room was once used for the students to disrobe and dress for the gymnasium and pool, areas 20 and 21 respectively.

TREASURE

The party can spend 10 minutes searching through the shelves of this locker room. At the end of the 10 minutes, they discover 50 sp, 20 gp, a *potion of greater healing*, and a spellbook which contains the following spells: *grease*, *floating disk*, *misty step*, *unseen servant*, and *web*.

23 - SAUNA

When someone first opens the door to this room, read the following:

Immediately, hot steam exits the door. Looking past the steam, you see a large room wrapped with knotty wooden boards and wooden benches. At the center of the room is a pit filled with large hunks of glowing coals.



This room is a sauna. The steam lightly obscures everything in the room. Also, it is under the effects of extreme heat, as described in the DMG.

ENCOUNTER: MEPHITS

Eight **steam mephits** hang out in this chamber. They once acted as the room's source of steam, but have grown accustomed to living in this strange level of the dungeon. Also, buried under the coals, is a **magma mephit** upon which the steam mephits frequently pour water, causing it agonizing pain. The magma mephit isn't strong enough to lift the coals off its body.

The mephits won't try to interact with the characters unless the characters attack first or try to free the magma mephit.

24 - GRIMLOCK LAIRS

This large series of halls connects Dambudzo's chambers with the rest of the lower sections. It is currently inhabited by grimlocks who've been driven mad by the ambient energy of this level. Other than that, the transmutation magic seems to have no other effect on them. The grimlocks are servants of Dambudzo and do her bidding.

24A - BALLROOM

This large, dark chamber looks like it may have once been a ballroom. But now it lie in shambles. A large, glass chandelier lies at the center of the floor, smashed to pieces. Mounds of white animal feces lie in piles at regular spots around the room.

Grimlocks. Six **grimlocks** guard this area. They attack the characters on (blind) sight.

24B - WESTERN HALL

Two grimlocks keep guard in the hall that leads west. They are mounted on strange, hairless wolves that lack eyes. Treat the wolves as dire wolves, except they have blindsight 30 ft. or 10 ft. while deafened (blind beyond this radius), they can't speak, and they have same Blind Senses as the grimlocks.

Arcane Locked Doors. The doors that lead to area 33 are arcane locked. A DC 25 Strength (Athletics) check is required to break them down. If the characters are carrying Defroksanz's phylactery, they can pass through doors without any issue.

24C - SOUTHERN HALL

The grimlocks use this hall as their barracks. There are piles of torn rugs and furs strewn everywhere which the grimlocks use as beds. There are eight **grimlocks** sleeping here when the characters enter the area.

Treasure. Among the grimlocks' refuse, the characters will find 105 sp, 30 gp, and a bit of amber worth 100 gp.

Arcane Locked Doors. The doors that lead to area 33 are arcane locked. A DC 25 Strength (Athletics) check is required to break them down. If the characters are carrying Defroksanz's phylactery, they can pass through doors without any issue.

25 - SOUTH HALLS

Any loud noises in this area attracts the attention of the grimlocks in areas 24a and 27.

Because of the grimlocks' heightened senses, they gain a +5 bonus to their passive Perception checks made to smell and hear.

26 - DAMBUDZO'S PRESENTATION HALL

This appears to be a classroom. A large curtain covers the western wall. Facing the curtain, there are two rows of school desks.

SECRET DOOR

There is a secret door hidden behind the curtain, found so long as someone checks behind it. The secret door leads into the corridor that connects this area and area 14.

27 - LOWER HALL

Six pillars carved in the likeness of red dragons hoist the 30-foot ceilings of this magnificent hall. A glass chandelier lies in ruins at the center of the room.

ENCOUNTER: GRIMLOCKS

Two **grimlocks** joined by a grimlock champion stand guard in this chamber. The grimlock champion uses the **gladiator** stat block except it has blindsight 30 ft. or 10 ft. while deafened.



SPEAR OF BLINDING LIGHT

Weapon (spear), uncommon

This spear is a magic weapon and has 3 charges. As an action, a creature can speak a command word to cause the spear to emit a blinding flash in a 20-foot radius sphere centered on the spear. Each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become blinded for 1 minute. A creature can repeat its saving throw at the end of its turns, ending the blinded effect on itself with a success. The user can avert its eyes to avoid the flash.

The spear regains 1d3 charges each day at dawn. If you expend the spear's last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the spear's magic fades and you can no longer use its blinding light feature.

(blind beyond this radius), he speaks Undercommon, and he has the same Blind Senses that the grimlocks do. The grimlock champion wields a spear of blinding light (see the sidebar).

TRAPPED DOOR

The characters can exit through the door leading to area 15a without setting off the trap. However, once the door closes, the trap resets and functions as normal.

TREASURE

The characters can take the spear of blinding light from the grimlock champion.

28 - LOUNGE

This old lounge is covered in cobwebs.

There is nothing of value here.

29 - GUARD ROOM

At the north end of this dusty old room are a pair of bunk beds. Two weapon racks and a table with dust-covered playing cards are at the south end.

This room was once for the barracks for Dambudzo's personal guards. They've been dead for centuries (and managed to stay that way).

TREASURE

A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a stone out of place near the bunks. Behind the stone, there is an old, rotting leather pouch stuffed with 30 gp and a silver necklace worth 25 gp.

30 - DAMBUDZO'S LABORATORY

The door to this chamber is locked. Once the characters get past the door, read the following:

This huge, pentagonal room looks like it was once used as an auditorium. Rows of chairs all face the south wall. A tall podium faces the chairs. Behind the podium is a large wall of black slate. A creature with knobby red scales and leathery, mishapen wings hunches over the slate wall, writing on it with a piece of chalk. Each scrap of the chalk emits a earsplitting screech.

"Wrong! It's all wrong!" growls the creature. "It's always wrong!"

The ceilings in this area are 40-feet high.

ENCOUNTER: DAMBUDZO

The creature is Dambudzo. Thanks to a transformative potion, she has changed herself into a creature that's not quite human and not quite a dragon. The change has driven her completely insane. The characters may have a chance to parlay with her, but her mood swings violently from one round to the next. One moment she might offer assistance—or ask for it—the next she might attack. Ultimately, she is a tragic figure whose ambitions got the better of her.

Dambudzo uses the **young red dragon** stat block, except she can't fly, and in place of Fire Breath, she has the following feature:

Transmutation Breath (Recharge 5-6). Dambudzo emits a transformative gas in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. A creature who fails its saving throw takes one level of exhaustion. If a character reaches 6 levels of exhaustion from this effect, it dies and instantly transforms into a gibbering moulder. The transformation of the body can be undone only by a *wish* spell.

TREASURE AND TRAP

Dambudzo's old spellbook is stuffed into the podium. The spellbook contains all the spells an **archmage** prepares up through 5th level. She keeps it protected with a *glyph of warding* with explosive runes that emit thunder damage.

31 - DAMBUDZO'S CHAMBERS

This old bedroom is in complete disarray. The bed has been torn apart, its mattress tossed aside and shredded. Broken bits of furniture cover the floor. Torn clothing lies everywhere.

TREASURE

Characters who search the wreckage will find Dambudzo's old *wand of wonder*.

32 - ALCHEMIST'S LABORATORY

This room appears to be an alchemist's laboratory. Unlike the other areas in this lair, the majority of the surfaces are relatively free of dust. The tables and shelves are lined with clean beakers and vials. There are clean utensils laid out in neat patterns.

On a table at the furthest end of this chamber sits a large, yellowish-white gem that gives off dull yellow light.

The gem is none other than The Necrostone, Defroksanz's phylactery. When Defroksanz was destroyed (either during the War of the Burning Plains or when the characters killed him in the previous adventure), his soul returned to the stone. Before he could reform his body, Dambudzo trapped Defroksanz within his own phylactery with a strong abjuration spell (detectable with a *detect magic* spell). The spell can be removed by casting *dispel magic* against a 7th-level spell on the stone.

Defroksanz is able to speak through the stone. He immediately senses that the characters aren't Dambudzo and requests that they free him from the spell that holds him. Likely, the characters will refuse.

The phylactery has AC 20 and 25 hit points. It is immune to all nonmagical damage plus any poison and psychic damage.

Before the characters destroy the phylactery, Defroksanz issues a warning:

"If you destroy me, you'll never be able to stop *him*."

No amount of coercing or threats will cause Defroksanz to reveal who "him" is. Instead, he offers that if they take him to the south hall, he will show them "Quabus' true purpose."

If Defroksanz's phylactery is destroyed, the dragon's soul is permanently destroyed along with it. Not even a *wish* spell will bring him back to life.

33 - THE LANDING

Both the doors that lead into this area are arcane locked. If the characters are in possession of Defroksanz's phylactery, they can pass through the doors without any trouble.

This huge hall looks like it hasn't been used in decades. Not only do dust and cobwebs cover the floor, but there are large gouges in the stone tiles as if a battle transpired here.

At the west end of the room, a 20-foot-wide staircase flanked by 10 draconic statues, 5 on each side of it, descends to a lower level of the dungeon. The room is lit by blue flame which burns from the mouths of the dragons.

The flames that come from the dragon's mouths are *continual flame* spells.

IRON SPIDER

At the center of the room stands a large mechanical spider. The spider guards the passage to the lower level. It won't attack unless someone attempts to go down the stairs. It will also avoid attacking the party if they are carrying Defroksanz's phylactery.

The spider uses a **shield guardian** stats, except that it has the following changes:

- The iron spider has a climb speed of 30 ft.
- The iron spider has the Spider Climb feature, which allows it to climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.
- The iron spider has the *cloudkill* spell stored in it.
- The iron spider's fist attacks are claw attacks. The attacks deal slashing damage instead of bludgeoning damage, but are otherwise the same. It can use its multiattack to attack with its claws twice.

34 - FURTHER INTO QUABUS

This massive staircase goes deeper into Quabus. For now, you are free to add your own layers of Quabus. You can also look toward the sequel to this series, *Further Into Quabus*.

WRAP-UP: THE NECROSTONE

Once the characters come into possession of Defroksanz's phylactery, The Necrostone, they will be able to stop the red dragon from returning to The Real. Of course, there are multiple parties who wish to control the phylactery, and not just Defroksanz's followers. Possessing such a dangerous relic will likely lead the characters on further adventures both in and outside Quabus.

ADVENTURE HOOK RESOLUTION

There were three adventure hooks mentioned in the introduction. Here is the resolution for each adventure hook:

A VISION OF DOOM

Once the characters locate Defroksanz's phylactery, the two-headed mantis returns in another dream. This time, it explains that finding The Necrostone was just the beginning. But the dragon's soul knows the location of an evil even more powerful than he; and it lies further into Quabus.

MAPS OF QUABUS

If the characters create detailed maps of the third level of the dragon dungeon Quabus, Keshud Bosteid pays the full 3,000 gp. However, if the maps show that a deeper, darker level lies beyond even the third, he'll offer an additional 5,000 gp if they go further into Quabus.

BRING BACK THE NECROSTONE

When the characters bring The Necrostone to Qiu Xiang, he pays them what he promised: 5,000 gp. However, if the characters reveal that the dungeon Quabus goes deeper than three levels, he challenges them to learn more about the secrets and artifacts that they might further into Quabus.

OPEN GAMING LICENSE

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other forms in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphics, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.
2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.
3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.
4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.
5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License
6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.
7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title, and interest in and to that Product Identity.
8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.
9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.
10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.
11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.
12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.
13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.
14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.
15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc. System Reference Document 5.0 Copyright 2016, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford, Chris Perkins, Rodney Thompson, Peter Lee, James Wyatt, Robert J. Schwalb, Bruce R. Cordell, Chris Sims, and Steve Townshend, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

END OF LICENSE